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A
DISSERTATION
UPON THE
CHRONOLOGY
OF THE
JUDGES OF ISRAEL.

BY
HUGH. B. AUCHINLECK, SCHOL. T. C. D.

Read, April 10, 1809.

THE question I have undertaken to examine is of considerable importance in the results which it indicates, and the consequences to which it leads us; both, as affording new and authentic testimony, to the truth, and accuracy, of the Jewish records; and as obviating one great ground of sceptical objection, and remark, on the alledged inconsistencies, and uncertainty, attending the history, or chronology, of the sacred writings. Nor is it devoid of a certain degree of interest, and attraction, even to those, who, in a religious or historical point of view, may undervalue the relative importance of the controversy. Perhaps, from the innumerable pages of

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discussion

discussion, and enquiry, with which ingenuity, erudition, or paradox, may have elucidated or obscured the annals of mankind, no single subject can be selected, that unites in so striking an assemblage all the various qualifications which criticism could desiderate, zeal supply, ingenuity present, or literature unfold, upon the decision of a speculative point. The zeal of the polemic, the copiousness of the commentator, the erudition of the scholar, the harsh recrimination of theological bitterness, and the happy temerity of critical correction, have been alternately exercised and exhausted. The passions of the human heart have been lamentably united with, and embittered, the prejudices of the religious education.* The pretensions of an infallible church will not admit many, to recognize even the possibility of error; while the assumptions of a rational dissent which the professors of reformed belief consistently claim, are carried by others, to lengths the most unwarrantable and dangerous. The theory of evidence, has been perverted to support the purposes of system, and the principles of legitimate

* Thus Genebrard, a Catholic writer, condemns the critical correction or rational doubts of Funccius, a Protestant, on a passage in the text, in terms the most severe and unqualified :—" Ut os impudentissimum Funccii evomuit," says he, while the great Scaliger defends his faith and possibly his practice also, by retorting on Genebrard the expressions, (which in this instance at least he seems to have deserved,) " Pecus maledicentissimum Genebrardus." But although I may mention this one instance to justify the censure I have bestowed on the conduct and severity of some of the authors I have been obliged to consult; I shall not again offend the taste or the feelings of the reader, by recurring to this disgusting picture of uncharitable recrimination and illiberal animosity.

mate discussion have been arbitrarily rejected, and reclaimed, to suit the views of hypothesis, or elude the authority of argument. To the philosopher, it may not be without a portion of instruction, and utility, to perceive the disputes on a chronologic character assume all the violence and severity of a religious controversy. And while *he* may smile in derision, or sigh in regret, over the weakness of the human intellect, as displayed in the solemn trifling, the solicitous anxiety, or the embittered vehemence, of the combatants; the *christian*, too, may derive advantage from the instructive lesson; and reflect with purer, and more unmixed pleasure, that infidelity has no cause to triumph, in the eventual decision of the question; or the friends of religious truth to fear, that its interests, or its accuracy, must be compromised in the discussion of its evidence. In renewing an enquiry, which for so many ages, has divided the opinions of the learned, little it should seem could be hoped from industry, and little expected from talent; but the arrow of Paris has *sometimes* succeeded, where the spear of Hector had been launched in vain. And the vanity of adding another name, to the hosts, who have tried their strength at the Ulysses' bow of chronologists, may perhaps, be pardoned, or overlooked, when the value of the stake or the importance of the interests involved, is considered. The comparative antiquity of the globe, as far as it concerns mankind, is affected in the enquiry; and the only means we possess, of synchronizing or correcting the histories of nations, is surrendered, to uncertainty and caprice, while this question

remains undecided. These observations the author would rely upon as an apology for his attempt; and he will venture to hope, that *they* will plead with the candid and the impartial in favour of any effort, however humble, to investigate the causes of this singular difference of opinion, on a question of such acknowledged importance; and to give a solution of its subject, consistent with the legitimate rules for interpreting scripture, and reconciling the difficulties of history.

The great ground of controversy and discussion is the authority of the celebrated passage in the 1st Book of Kings; which affords the chronologic characters of the æra of the foundation of the temple; and the consistency and agreement of the interval therein delivered with the several periods deducible from the history of the Judges, and the various fortunes of the Jewish nation, from the exod to the commencement of the regal state.

The passage itself in question is thus rendered conformably to the Vulgate in our translation :

1 Kings, vi. 1.—And it came to pass, in the four hundred and eightieth year, after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Zif, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the Lord."

Before I proceed to develope the peculiar views of my own system and hypothesis, it may be useful to deliver a rapid and concise analysis of the different theories, which have been already submitted on the subject of this enquiry; and to
examine

examine into the authority and evidence of the grounds on which they have been supported. This, perhaps, will have the further advantage, of impressing more deeply on the mind of the reader, the vast importance which has been, in all ages of the church, attached by the learned, to the solution of the question; and, at least a view of the objections under which these hypotheses severally labour, will prepare the mind for the reception, of a theory simplified from their obscurities, and freed from their errors, and objections. In this indeed I have only the drudgery of transcription to deprecate, or the difficulty of analysis and selection to surmount. Each seems more anxious, as well as more successful, in his attempts to destroy, than to rebuild; to overthrow, than to restore; and the arena seems sufficiently open to renewed competition, as far as the mutual hostility of the combatants could have cleared it for their successors. In effect, the arguments which have induced me to reject the systems already proposed, will be stated *generally* in the words of the adversaries who have noticed them; each exposing the errors he has discovered in the hypothesis he attacks; to be himself successively reprehended for a neglect of the same reasoning, or a commission of the same faults, he had originally reprov'd in others. Thus, it is, that even the most obscure, or trivial subject of enquiry, may be made useful in the cultivation of mind, and thus, in the language applied to much more interesting and important discussions, *multi pertransibunt, argebitur scientia.*

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The sentiments of the different authors, who have distinguished themselves in this celebrated controversy, may be conveniently ranged in three general classes :—

1. Those, who led by their several hypotheses to lengthen the interval considerably, have endeavoured to give a new and forced *interpretation* to the passage, conformably to their own views of the subject, while they acknowledge its authenticity. 2. Those, who contend that the numbers, assigned in the text, have been falsified by the copyists, and, as they at present stand, are totally irreconcilable to the chronology of the sacred history from the exod. And 3. Those, who support the fidelity of the interval according to the text, and allow absolutely, but four hundred and eighty years, from the exod to the foundation of the temple. It is for the last class, I declare myself, but, upon what different grounds will be seen in the sequel.

1st. The learned Pere Petau, better known by his scholastic appellation of Petavius, whose various works and more particularly his “*Uranologia*,” and his “*Doctrina Temporum*,” bear equal testimony to his judgment, his erudition, and his sagacity,* having made every retrenchment which his system and his calculus, would safely permit, found notwithstanding, that the interval between the exod and the foundation of the temple, still remained 520 years or forty years of excess,
above

* If, indeed, our applause should not be qualified by a reprehension of the uncandid severity, with which he magnifies the inaccuracies, or misconceptions, of his predecessor, the great Scaliger.

discussion, and enquiry, with which ingenuity, erudition, or paradox, may have elucidated or obscured the annals of mankind, no single subject can be selected, that unites in so striking an assemblage all the various qualifications which criticism could desiderate, zeal supply, ingenuity present, or literature unfold, upon the decision of a speculative point. The zeal of the polemic, the copiousness of the commentator, the erudition of the scholar, the harsh recrimination of theological bitterness, and the happy temerity of critical correction, have been alternately exercised and exhausted. The passions of the human heart have been lamentably united with, and embittered, the prejudices of the religious education.* The pretensions of an infallible church will not admit many, to recognize even the possibility of error; while the assumptions of a rational dissent which the professors of reformed belief consistently claim, are carried by others, to lengths the most unwarrantable and dangerous. The theory of evidence, has been perverted to support the purposes of system, and the principles of legitimate

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the children of Israel," (1 Kings, 6-1), he produces the same texts as Petau, (Deut. 4-4-5, Ps. 114-1-3), and to authorize his actual epoch for the commencement of the 480 years, he subducts them, from 598, and thence deduces 118 years after the real exod, for the final settlement in the land.

To say nothing of the propriety with which he first assumes an arbitrary interval, (598 years) and then strains the meaning of unambiguous expressions, to impress the sacred text into the service of his theory, I would ask, what are we to think, in general, of an hypothesis which affords such a facility to system, and such an inlet to conjecture, unsupported, and contradictory; which, in a word, will afford to Petau a latitude of 40 years as the meaning of the term Exodus, and on the same grounds, extend the same interpretation to 118, in favour of Codoman? The force of this objection was so evident and irresistible, that many authors, though adopting the sentiment, refused to support it by so loose an interpretation of the sacred text, and invented other grounds to justify their computation, which would assign a more enlarged interval between the exod, and the building of the temple, alledging, that the author of the Book of Kings has expressly neglected the periods of servitude, and anarchy, which afflicted, and oppressed, the Jewish nation, and has not included them in his calculus; "*Quia tristia & inauspicata, mortua & infausta sunt,*" as Isaac Vossius expresses it; and he produces some degree of evidence that this was the custom of other nations, and of the Asiatics

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in particular. Livy, (4-20) remarks, “ *Quidam annales velut funesti nihil præter nomina Consulium Suggestunt;*” and Job “wishes the day of his birth may not be counted in the months.” Several, and in particular Pezron, (the great antagonist of Marsham, in every question of chronologic discussion to which that great man has lent the sanction of his authority,) have adopted this solution, and have founded upon it a system sufficiently daring and unauthorized; the latter enlarging the interval between the exod and the foundation of the temple to no less than 873 years, the excess of which above the number assigned in the Book of Kings (viz. 393 years) he fills up with servitudes, and anarchies, in the manner most agreeable to his hypothesis, and his fancy. The idea seems ingenious, except when pushed to the monstrous lengths of Pezron and his followers; but it is no more: it will not stand the touch-stone of judicious criticism, and if it was not sufficiently refuted in itself, from the very fact, (as we shall see in the sequel) of the years of the servitudes being distinctly enumerated and marked in the Book of Judges, we might ask, in the words of Strauchius, “ *Quare igitur diluvii, mentionem fecit Moyses, quod universo mundo, incomparabilem attulit tristitiam; & quid fiet de excidii tum Israelitici, tum Judaici historia? Certe si in sacris libris non tantum anarchiæ, sed etiam servitutis, tempora tanquam tristia & inauspicata non memorantur, nec tristissima hæc memorari debuissent.*” (*Strauchius Brev. 422.*)

In a word, does a simple date comprehend an history of misfortunes and anarchies, that the sacred historian should fear to announce any thing unfavourable to his nation in marking an epoch or an interval? Surely, this conjecture affords no solution to the alledged difficulty, or no argument for introducing an arbitrary calculus. The authorities of Vossius himself bear out the conclusion against his principle; for the name of a Consul alone affords the requisite series of chronology. But, what shall we alledge against the temerity of an author, who forgets that he is commenting on the history of truth—that this history “was written for our instruction,” and that, containing the dreadful denunciations of the vengeance of the Almighty, it should also contain a record of those punishments, which are at once the completion, and the sanction, of his commination and his law. Surely, he should have remembered, that the great and singular characteristic of the scriptural history—that, which distinguishes it, and distinguishes it to its honour, from the history of every other people, is the inflexible impartiality, both in respect to person and to circumstance, that marks its narration. In the very Book of Kings, to the author of which he ascribes this disingenuous suppression, he will find every instance of infliction, and calamity, referred to the national disobedience and guilt. Vide 2 Kings, 17-7, & seq.

The second class, or those who contend for an alteration of the text, or an error of the copyists, is more formidable, and
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their arguments possess infinitely more of consistency and strength. I shall proceed to give a summary of their reasoning and hypothesis :

The great argument common both to this class and the preceding, is the disparity between the interval in the Books of Kings and that reported in the Acts, xiii. 20. where St. Paul says, " After the conquest of Canaan, God gave them Judges for 450 years, until Samuel the Prophet." And Louis Cappellus declares expressly, " Necesse est alterutrum horum numerorum (Scil in lib. Regum & Acts) esse falsum non possunt enim simul consistere." Vossius, the elder, agrees with him, adding, according to his own supputation, " Ant centum annis justum numerum auxit Lucas sive Paulus vel Regum lib. 1. sive III. (scil. counting the 1 of Samuel the first) centum anni desunt." Perizonius forcibly contends for the error of the copyists, and concludes, " Mihi, modestius longe & reverentius videtur, mutare istic unam numeri notam, quam hic, complura exturbare penitus vocabula." Sulpicius Severus also says, " Non dubito Librariorum, potius negligentia veritatem fuisse corruptam, quam ut propheta, erraverit." (Hist. Eccles. 1-40.) Serrarius likewise coincides with Vossius and Perizonius, only, that where *they* would hold an error of an hundred years, in 1 Kings, 6-1. reading 580, he would wish to read 680, " & pro," says he, " quadringentissimo, legere sexcentissimo, quam cum tricis innumeris, anxie, ne dicam misere conflictari, ac dum unius loci emendationem metuo, sexcentis me difficultatum laqueis involvere."

The opinions, too, of almost all the Greek chronologists, who universally appear to neglect the authority of the Book of Kings, and reckon considerably more than it admits, seem also to afford a strong ground of evidence that the passage is corrupted, and that they read a different interval in the copies of their own times; for even Eusebius himself, who in his Chronicle, quotes, and follows the supputation of the 1 Kings, 6-1, yet, in many other places, and particularly in the preface to his Ecclesiastical History, admits a different calculus, and enlarges the controverted interval agreeably to the other chronologists: besides, the Greek copies of the Septuagint read 440, (except one exemplar mentioned by Usher); and the venerable Bede acknowledges, that in some MSS. of his time, he had found six hundred instead of four, or according to Hardouin, five hundred instead of four. His words seem to imply he had found 680: “Et ne quis dicat falsam nos sequi regulam, 480 annorum, quasi 680, sint potius juxta quædam exemplaria computandi,” &c. Omnes apud Vignoles, vol. 1. 185, &c. & auctores eò citatos videsis.

And Josephus, also, although he uniformly reckons the years of the Judges, (except in the instances of Tholai and Abdon, which appear to be faults of the copyist, and are in themselves trifling,) conformably to the Hebrew, yet evidently makes no account of the supputation, 1 Kings, 6-1; for he says, Antiq. 8-2. “Solomon began to build the temple 3102 years after the creation, 1440 after the deluge, 1020 after

after the vocation of Abraham, and 592 after the departure from Egypt.”—Edit. Gen. 1609.

Eutychius also, the learned patriarch of Alexandria, with whom we have become acquainted through the labours of the illustrious orientalist Pococke, adds his name and authority to the hosts already mentioned, reckoning from the exod, to the reign of David 606 years, adding then, the 40 years of David, and four first of Solomon, agreeably to 1 Kings, 6-1, we have 650 years from the exod to the foundation of the temple.

In fine, to avoid accumulating evidence and materials unnecessarily, we shall conclude with Clemens Alexandrinus, whose works, in arranging the series of events in ancient history; in synchronizing the times of sacred and profane chronology; and in preserving valuable notices from the writings of several authors, who have not themselves come down to us, will ever be highly estimated by the learned. “From the beginning of the Judges,” says he, “until the end of the government of Samuel, there are 463 years and 7 months, (and he counts Joshua the first judge,) after that,” he adds, “Saul reigned 20 years alone, then David 40; so that, according to our chronology, which is most exact, if to the 523 and 7 months to the death of David, you add the 120 years of Moses and the 40 of Solomon, there are from the birth of Moses to the death of Solomon, 683 years and 7 months.” We see then, that Clemens, who appears to have considered
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this subject very attentively, (giving us, as we have noticed, minute chronologic characters omitted by less accurate historians,) reckons from the exod, in eightieth year of Moses, to the foundation of the temple, in the fourth year of Solomon, 567 years and 7 months :

<i>Years.</i>	<i>Months.</i>	
463	7	from Joshua to Samuel,
20		Saul,
40		David,
4		Solomon,
40		in the wilderness.
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567	7	
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Thus I have, I trust, impartially stated the evidence and authorities against the opinion I have thought proper to adopt; and doubtless it will appear forcible and almost decisive: yet many and great names may be adduced in support of the controverted passage, (1 Kings, 6-1,) whose theories I must shortly recapitulate, and animadvert upon, before I produce my own system, which although agreeing with them, in supporting the authenticity of the text, yet, as will appear, differs most materially in the grounds on which it rests, and in the answers which it opposes to the adherents of the contrary opinion.

3d. The first name, in point of antiquity, who upheld the authenticity of the contested text, was Eusebius, bishop of Cæsaréa

Cæsaréa, whose authority, in questions of history and chronology, is deservedly respectable. The translation of his Chronicon by Hieronymus or Jerome, which is to us the original, (as the Greek Eusebius of Scaliger is rather a monument of the genius and industry of the editor than an original work;) made his opinion familiar to the Latin Church, which universally adopting the Vulgate translation from the Hebrew, was induced, from a respect to its authority, to receive the computation of Eusebius in this point, while it differed from him in almost every other. The great Scaliger supported it with all the earnestness and zeal of an editor, and an host of learned names bowed to his chronological supremacy; until in the seventeenth century, the Vossii, the Capelli, Louis, and James; and in general the French critics and chronologists, began to sound the trumpet of sedition, or enquiry, against the authority of Scaliger, and the authenticity or interpretation of the text; fortifying their doubts and hesitation by the arguments already recited, and more particularly by the evidence of the Greek Fathers. Yet the antient faith of chronology did not want its advocates, in this hour of historic heresy and dissent: and Usher and Marsham stepped forward, with no mean apparatus of solution and reasoning, in its defence.

The grand principle on which *they* proceed, is to include the terms of servitude and oppression in the years of repose, or in the several periods assigned to the government of the Judges; and by this expedient, they endeavour to adhere to
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the 480 years mentioned in the text. This, Usher supports on the ground, that Hebrew numbers should be read as if they were ordinal and not cardinal, as the grammarians express it ; that is, when the historian relates, the land had rest 40 years, it means, that it commenced to be in repose in the fortieth year after the conclusion of the preceding repose.

On this principle, he thus constructs his table:—

A.M.

3263 Joshua, 6 years of government.

3269 First repose, land divided.

Government of the Ancients.

3301 First oppression of Chusan Rishathaim, 8 years.

3309 Othniel, in the fortieth year after the first repose.

3371 Second oppression, or servitude under Eglon, 18 years.

3389 Ehud after Othniel, in the eightieth year.

3409 Third oppression under Jabin, 20 years.

3429 Deborah, third Judge in the fortieth after Ehud.

3462 Fourth oppression, Midianites, 7 years.

3469 Gideon, fourth avenger, in the fortieth after Deborah.

Add 9 intervening years.

3478 Abimelech, 3 years.

3481 Tholah, 23 Do.

3504 Jair, 22 Do. fifth oppression, Ammonites, 18 years inclusive.

3526 Eighth Judge, Jephthah, 6 years.

3532 Ninth, Ibsan, - - 7 Do.

3539

- 3539 Tenth, Elon, 10 years.
 3549 Eleventh, Abdon, 8 Do.
 3557 Thirteenth, Eli, 40 Do. including sixth oppression.
 3558 ——— of Philistians, 40 years, and thirteenth Judge.
 3577 ——— Samson, - 20 Do.
 3597 Capture of the ark, and beginning of the government
 of Samuel, for 22 years.
 3619 Saul, first King, 40 Do.
 3659 David, - - - 40 Do.
 3699 Solomon.
 3703 Fourth year of Solomon, and foundation of the temple.
 Add to these the 40 years of Moses in the desert, and the
 sum is exactly four hundred and eighty years.

3263 beginning of Joshua.

Subduct 40 for the æra of the exod.

3223

Add 1 Kings, 6-1, 480

Sum, 3703 foundation of the temple, as above.

Marsham has nearly agreed, at least in principle, with Usher, but differs in the arrangement of the periods, and the arguments by which he supports them. It will not be unnecessary or useless, to subjoin a view of his system and reasoning. It is as follows.

NOTE.—*My edition is that of Leipzig, 1683, in quarto—the English editions are commonly in folio.*

A.M.

- 3267 Joshua, 25 years.
3273 ——— Division of the land.
3292 Commencement of idolatry, which continued 34 years.
3326 First servitude under Chusan Rishathain, 8 years.
3334 Othniel, first Judge, 40 years.
3374 Second servitude, under Eglon, 18 years.
3392 Ehud, second Judge, 80 years, including the servitude.
3412 Under Jabin, King of Canaan, 20 years, and
3432 The government of Deborah and Barak, 40 years, in
the North, of Israel.
3472 Fourth servitude, under the Midianites, 7 years.
3479 Gideon, fourth Judge, 40 years.
3519 Abimelech, fifth Judge, 3 years.
3522 Tholah, sixth ——— 23 ———
3545 Jair, - seventh ——— 22 ———
3567 Fifth servitude, under the Ammonites, 18 years, in the
Western side; and the Philistines, on the East, who
ruled 40 years, until Samuel.
3585 Jephthah, eighth Judge, 6 years.
3587 Twelfth Judge, Samson, for 20 years, in the Eastern
tribes with Eli, thirteenth Judge, during the Philistine
oppression.
3591 Ibsan, ninth Judge, in the West, after Jephthah, 7 years.
3598 Elon, tenth Judge, in the West, 10 years.
3607 Samuel, fourteenth Judge, after Samson, for 16 years.
3608 Abdon, eleventh Judge, in the West, 8 years.
- 7 years

7 years deficient, in the account of the Eastern Judges.
 3623 Saul, first King over all the tribes, after Samuel's government of 16 years.

Thus it appears, he calculates the interval between Joshua and the beginning of Saul, 356 years, to which if we add the 40 years of Moses' government in the desert, the 80 years of Saul and David, and the four first years of Solomon, agreeable the passage, 1 Kings, 6-1. we shall have precisely 480 years, as in the disputed text.

From 3623 beginning of Saul,
 Subduct 3267 ————— Joshua.

Remains, 356 Interval between them.

Add, 40 of Moses in the desert.

— 80 of David and Saul, 40 years each.

— 4 of Solomon.

Sum, 480 years from the exod to the foundation of the temple.

It is evident, then, that the principle both of Usher and of Marsham, which originally was invented or introduced by Eusebius, in his *Chronicle secundum Judæorum traditiones*,* as he says, appears satisfactorily to solve the difficulty, at least so far as to agree with the sacred historian, in

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reckoning

* The *Chronicon Paschale* also, in the case of Othniel, to whom it attributes 32 years, remarks, "that the 8 years of the preceding oppression are to be included, κατὰ τὰς Ἰουδαίων παραδόσεις."—p. 78. Edit. Du Cange

reckoning only 480 years, and that, of course, we may indifferently adopt either, according as we approve of their system and reasoning. It is necessary, then, to state the arguments that have induced me to reject the hypotheses of both, and to propose another, that should appear more completely to fulfil the conditions of the problem, as the analysts speak.

With regard to the system of Usher, I may remark, first, that he has departed from his original principle, in allotting nine additional or intercalary years between the government of Gideon and Abimelech, for which he gives no reason, except we receive as one, his simple assertion, that he acted on better grounds than other chronologists, (*meliora ratione*, &c.) who, from a similar motive, (*viz.* that of completing the sum of 480 years required by the text,) have granted to Joshua 16 or 17 years, and this when the sacred text (*Judges 8-20.*) says expressly, “The country was in *quietness* 40 years, in the days of Gideon.” If he had been consistent with himself, Abimelech should have succeeded in the same year that the 40 years of repose after Deborah concluded; or, if he had been consistent with Scripture, he should have allotted 40 years to Gideon, instead of nine.

2d. Again, in allotting to Joshua only 6 years, he is certainly at variance with the whole stream of antiquity, as the fathers unanimously allow him 27 or 30 years at the least, (*vide* Vossius Capellus, Scaliger, and the authorities they cite, to which add the Alex. Chronicle, which allows him
27 years.

27 years. I quote the copy, in the Louvain edition of the Fathers, in Marsh's library), and evidently contrary to the authority of Scripture, (Joshua, 23-1.) where Joshua is said "to have waxed old and stricken in years," *after the conquest* and the division of the land, and (c. 24. v. 29.) he died aged 110 years. Now, we learn, (Joshua, c. 14-7.) that Caleb was 40 years old when he was sent to view the land with Joshua, and as *he* (Caleb) was 85 years of age at the division of the land, (Joshua, 14-10.) it will follow, that, supposing Joshua nearly of the age of Caleb, (which certainly has some verisimilitude, as he would be taken in the flower of his youth for an office of such responsibility and exertion as that of a spy), that he survived the division of the land, at least 15 years. On what principle, then, does Usher abridge his government to six?

3dly. The sense of the sacred historian, (Judges, c. 3-4-11.) appears evidently to allot but 40 years repose after (or, as Usher will have it, *to*) the period of Othniel's victory; yet his calculus would give us 62 years, viz. from A. Jul. Per. 3309, to the oppression of Eglon, 3371.

Similarly, he allows but 20 years to Ehud, in place of 80; (Judges 3. 30.); to the third repose, instead of 40 years, he allots but 33; to the fourth, only 9, as we have seen in the first objection.

4th. His supputation will not agree with the message of Jephthah to the king of the Ammonites, (Judges, c. 11. v. 26.) in which he computed 300 years from the conquest of the Amorites.

Amorites until his time: for the beginning of Joshua is placed in 3263, and that of Jephtha, 3526, affording an interval of 263 years, nearly 40 less than the period assigned.

5th. He does not adhere to his own proper principle of estimating the cardinal numbers, as if they were ordinal, but arbitrarily rejects and resumes it, as it suits his convenience, or his theory. *Cumque numerorum in temporum notatione ea sit ratio ut interdum quando, res aliquis contigerit indicat, interdum quam diu duraverit; in annis oppressorum posteriorem explicationem in annis quietis terræ, priorem hic accipiendam censemus.*

The objections to the system of Marsham are, in part, the same as those I have urged against that of the learned Usher; yet Marsham has avoided some of his errors, as we may observe in the period he assigns to Joshua, Gideon, and in some other points. But, as he found that this would materially interfere with his calculus, and his object, which was to compute according to the text 1 Kings, 6-1. he was compelled to invent a new expedient to abridge the remaining years of the Judges, in order to include only the precise interval of 480 years. He admits, with the sacred historian, that after Ehud had slain Eglon, king of Moab, the land had rest 80 years, and so avoids the error, or at least inconsistency, of Usher. But he contends, that it was only in the Eastern tribes; for that, in the 20th year of that repose, Jabin, king of Canaan, who reigned at Hazor, near (or in) the tribe of
Asher,

Asher, (or, according to Cellarius and Reland, Naphthalim), invaded the Western tribes, and subjugated them for twenty years: but Barak, of the tribe of Naphthalim, having defeated Sisera, the *whole* country enjoyed peace 40 years, which concluded with the 80, which the Eastern tribes enjoyed.

2d. He preserves this distinction of the tribes, in the sequel, as appears from the table. After the death of Jair, the seventh Judge, the Israelites were attacked in concert by the Ammonites on the East, and by the Philistines on the West, (1 Judges, c. 10. v. 7. 8. 9.) On the Eastern side, after the oppression of the Ammonites, for 18 years, Jephthah, Ibsan, Eglon, and Abdon, were Judges, for 31 years; during which the Eastern tribes were at peace. On the West, the Philistines ruled 40 years until Samuel, who governed 16 years before the choice of Saul to be king. This makes 56 years, so that Samuel began to judge the Western tribes in the last year of Elon, and was co-temporary with Abdon in the East. As for Samson, we read, “ he judged the people, 20 years in the days of the Philistines,” (Judges, c. 15. & 20.) or during the period of the 40 years their domination lasted; but he did not deliver them, neither did Eli accomplish their deliverance. He died in the twentieth year of the servitude under the Philistines, after the captivity of ark, and his judicature, whenever it commenced, was only a civil jurisdiction. (“ Illius judicatura, quandocunq cæperit, non alia fuerit, quam litium pro Pontificali auctoritate, disceptatio

tatio jurisquedictio.”)* This account of Marsham’s system, which it was necessary to premise, in order to make the table which I have given above from him, perfectly intelligible and clear, is extracted literally from his great work, (my edition is in quarto, p. 307, &c.) and from it, it is evident, that he includes an interval of 169 years within 49.

Jud. c. 10. 8.	18 years	under the Ammonites.
Judg. 12. v. 7. and sequel,	31 years,	four Judges, Jephthah,
		Ibsan, Elon, and Abdon.
J. C. 13. v. 1. and sequel,	40 years	under Philistines.
C. 15. v. 20. ———,	20 ———	Samson.
1 Samuel, 4. v. 18. ———,	40 ———	Eli.
	20 after the return of the ark.	

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“Hujus Synchronismi ratione evanescunt difficultates,” says he, “& exundantes numeri intra ripam colliguntur.”

1st. Little will be necessary to refute this system in some of its leading principles, for Scripture does not acknowledge this distinction of two contemporary Judges. (Judg. 10. 7. 8. 9.) The Israelites were attacked, both by the Ammonites and Philistines, to the East, as he alledges; but it adds, (v. 9.) “They passed the Jordan immediately, and attacked the other tribes,” who, according to him, were at peace.

2nd. Three Judges, whom he places over the East, after Jephthah, were really from the West: Ibsan, of Bethlehem, (whether

* Marsham Sæculum. XI. p. 308.

whether of Judah or Zebulun, both to the West, (Jud. 12. v. 10.) Elon, of Zebulun, (v. 11.) Abdon, of Pirathon, “*in the land of*” Ephraim, (v. 13. 15.)

3d. If the Western tribes were oppressed by the Philistines in the time of these Judges, how can he add, “The country enjoyed peace during their government?”

4th. If, in the time of Jephthah, Ephraim was in subjection to the Philistines, how could he, in the civil war, destroy 42,000 of them, without the Philistines interfering in defence of their subjects and tributaries.

5th. In fine, he makes four Judges contemporary, as we have seen, without any scriptural authority, which we can by no means admit, as the whole tenor of the scripture, (except perhaps, in one instance,) marks the Judges as successive. (Vide Judges passim.)

It could not be supposed that so many errors and unsupported assumptions, in the hypotheses of these great men, would not have been perceived and pointed out by those who followed and examined them. In effect, what has been attributed, with justice, to Locke, in metaphysics, may be applied to Usher and his illustrious co-adjutor, in chronology. They have themselves thrown so brilliant a light on the subjects of their science and pursuit, that the subsidiary rays collected and concentrated by their genius, have enabled us to point out the path from which they deviated, and to detect the errors which misled them. These objections which I have

urged against their hypotheses, have been partly brought forward by several able advocates of the contrary system, and more particularly by the accurate and copious Vignoles, and appeared so forcible and convincing, that despairing after the failure of such minds as Usher, Marsham, and Scaliger, to support satisfactorily the authority of the Hebrew text, they began to found themselves on the reading of some Greek copies, and the general opinion of the Grecian Fathers, supported by the passage of the Acts mentioned above; and proposed to alter the contested passage, 1 Kings, 6-1. by reading 580 or 680; or by interpreting it in a different manner, and supposing it omitted the years of the servitudes and anarchies. Capellus and Vossius support the new reading of 580 years, which they alledge will completely solve every difficulty, and take in the whole period.

I have already submitted a view of their arguments, and after I have presented the hypothesis which I have adopted, I shall, in the remarks upon the objections that may be alledged against it, urge other reasons in refutation of their system, and, I trust, demonstrate that my own is more consistent, satisfactory, and conformable.

But, before I proceed to deliver the peculiar views of the theory I propose, I must premise some general observations, tending to elucidate the system and method on which I have proceeded.

1st.

1st. The duration of the government of the four first Judges or avengers is not expressed in the sacred historian ; or it is very differently expressed from that of their successors.

2dly. That the terms of the Vulgate, “ *quievit terra*,” or of our translation, “ that the land had rest,” signify a peace, or cessation from all hostility during the expressed period ; which peace or rest is concluded, only, by having again recourse to arms, without being interrupted by any servitude intervening, unless when the people rose to avenge themselves on their oppressors, so that every such expression, “ *quievit terra*,” or “ the land had rest,” is to be understood as declaring, that such a period intervened without hostilities interrupting it ; and when the words “ *a præliis*,” or, as our translator has it, “ from war,” (Jos. 14-15.) are not expressed in the Book of Judges, they are to be understood.

3dly. That we have no authority from Scripture for understanding the words, “ the land had rest,” as synonymous to the terms, “ the Judge presided,” as most authors have done, since it will not be clear, if we do *thus* understand them, why the sacred historian should not have been consistent in his expression, as the Judges, after the four first, are distinctly mentioned to have “ judged Israel,” for the assigned periods.

To prove the first, it will not be necessary to look farther than the sacred history itself, (Judges, chap. 3. & 4. *passim*.)

and to consider properly the force and evidence of my third observation.

On the second, I would remark, that according to the acknowledged principle, "that an author is his own best commentator," and the admitted conformity of style in the earlier historic records of the Jewish nation, I have produced a passage from another book (Joshua, 14. 15.) of similar style and period, which absolutely expresses the words I would have understood in all passages of the same tendency and import; so that unless we understand the expressions in the manner I have proposed, we convict the author of the Book of Judges of a manifest inconsistency in his narration, unknown to the books of the Old Testament, and contradictory to the uniform simplicity of the Eastern genius, which delights to narrate the same fact in a similar style of language, and cast of thought; and finally, that it was so understood by the ancient interpreters, as many of the earlier Vulgates add "a præliis," as in Jos. Vide Simon sur le vieux Test.

The third observation, I trust, is already fully elucidated in the preceding remarks, and is, in itself, sufficiently clear. But we want not their authority to support or to confirm our supposition, since we can refer to another passage, so completely in point, that it is surprising how it could have been overlooked in the decision of this question. In the 2 Book of Chron. 17 chap. 1 verse, we are informed—Asa succeeded his father Abijah, and "in his days the land was quiet ten years."

years." Here sovereignty is distinctly separated from repose, and it is sufficiently remarkable that the same terms are used in the Book of Judges, 8-28, in relating the repose immediately succeeding the conquest of Midian.

There are, indeed, but two modes by which a rational or judicious critic can attempt to reconcile or to correct an author on whom he comments. He must either adhere to the strictness of the letter, and invent a method of accounting for apparent inconsistencies and contradictions, amending with judgment and altering with cautious and deliberate investigation. Or, conceiving the true spirit and meaning of the author, the system he pursues, and the method he develops, to be inconsistent with the strict expression of the letter, he must reject its authority, where it fetters and constrains him, refer its errors to the mistakes of a copyist, and endeavour by a bold, and hardy, or a subtle, delicate, and discriminating criticism, to derive from the author himself, or from sources collateral and extrinsic, evidence and grounds to correct and to alter his original; to justify his doubts of the authenticity of a passage, or to afford him lights whereby to restore and to amend it. Usher and Marsham are willing to enrol themselves among the first class, whenever it is possible, and the former explicitly declares, speaking of an error in the copyists, "*Quidvis potius dicendum fuerat quam ad hoc desperatum remedium recurendum.*" (Chron. p. 87-6.) While the numerous hosts who combat their authority and interpretation,

interpretation, find no difficulty in ranging themselves with the latter class, and aspire rather to the praise of ingenuity in the critic, than that of zeal or fidelity in the commentator. It is surprising, that Usher and Marsham, who display an anxiety so laudable to uphold the authenticity of the text, in a single point, should have overlooked or neglected to observe its incomparable accuracy in many others, should have agreed to convict the historian of an inconsistency of expression unknown to the sacred writings, and without reason or authority presume, that repose, and jurisdiction, are synonymous, and this, when every passage in which the term "repose," occurs is directly contradictory to their sentiment, and at variance with their hypothesis. It may seem, that the system of Usher is not immediately subjected to the severity of this censure, since, on grounds nearly similar to my own, he holds the terms to bear a different construction. Yet a consideration of the objections I have (after his adversaries) urged against his theory, will clearly demonstrate, that he is obnoxious to this censure in substance and spirit, if not in letter and expression, because he arbitrarily rejects the authority of the text, and substitutes intervals and periods unknown and unrecognized. He attempts to define, where the sacred historian affords him no data even to describe; he assigns periods without evidence, and limits epochs on assumptions, perfectly gratuitous, (vide objection 3. above); and all this on the principle of adhering to the *literal* fidelity of
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of the text, 1 Kings, 6-1. If the accurate archbishop, or the learned Marsham, had examined the text with unprejudiced judgment; if they had followed, step by step, the detail of the narrative, and had collected and applied the various minute circumstances of elucidation and commentary which may be gleaned from the perusal, they would not have been compelled to adopt, or invent, systems so unsupported and so unauthorized, to defend a single text by the disregard or neglect of several equally authentic and express. And perhaps, also, had their adversaries and opponents, who have been more willing to point out and to reprobate the errors of these great men, than to imitate the example they have afforded of a laudable anxiety for the interests of truth, and for the authenticity of Scripture, been less desirous of acquiring the praise of ingenuity and originality, than of establishing their titles to the more solid applause of accuracy and candour; *they*, also, would have perceived, that, the text, within itself, affords materials to justify and to reconcile its apparent inconsistencies; and that, new light, authority, and evidence, in favour of the truth and testimony of the whole, may be struck out from the collision and analysis of the parts; that the few rules and observations we have laid down are to be found in Scripture, as they are in reason; and that, from a simple adherence to the principles they indicate and propose, every difficulty will be simplified, corrected, or removed. It must be evident, that the sacred historian,

torian, agreeably to the uniform tenor and spirit of the biblical records, intends to present us with a chronological order and series in his narration. The author of the Book of Kings undoubtedly, in marking the interval that had elapsed between the exod and the foundation of the temple, had a view to prevent any difficulty or hesitation that might arise from the dubious calculus pursued in the history of the Judges; and the precautionary wisdom and foresight which directed him, is clearly manifested in the event. It is, indeed, almost impossible to derive any unobjectionable and consistent system from the numbers nakedly assigned in the narrative, unassisted by the grand epoch afforded by the text, (1 Kings, 6-1.) and the various circumstances casually disclosed in the history, which tend to elucidate and confirm it. The numberless variety of opinions which have been delivered upon this subject, and which all pretend to stand on the same ground of adherence to the assigned periods of jurisdiction and servitude, are abundant proofs of this. Among the ancient chronologists, the periods and intervals oscillated between the 480 or 600 of Eusebius, and the 757 of Nicephorus; Apud Vignoles, but Nicephorus ad calcem Syncelli in Goar's edition, Paris, 1652, reckons from exod to David 630, which would give only 674 to the foundation of the temple; while, among the Christian writers, the younger Vossius and Pezron, as we have seen, have discovered authority and evidence to enlarge it beyond even
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the extreme of Nicephorus, above an hundred years. Convinced that the design of the sacred historian is, to afford us the exact interval, which elapsed between the foundation of the temple and the exod; and equally convinced, from the failure of so many, that any attempt to derive a consistent period from the Book of Judges, without having recourse to the passage in which the epoch is assigned, would be fruitless and unsuccessful, I can devise but two methods of proceeding: first, either to defend the fidelity of the passage absolutely, as we find it in the Vulgate and the Hebrew; or else, to adopt some correction that will not completely deviate from the original, and read 580 with the elder Vossius, or 680 with Serrarius, and some others. I have determined in favour of the former, on grounds which I shall proceed to develope, and which I hold to be equally clear and irrefragable. Indeed, the principles of interpretation I have premised, would, of themselves, lead me to this determination, since the correction of Vossius is only adopted in order to include the periods of repose and servitude consecutively, considering repose and jurisdiction as synonymous—a position which I have endeavoured to prove is equally unsupported by Scripture; and, as I shall now proceed to demonstrate, is disavowed by the rules of sound criticism and legitimate interpretation. The grand difficulty under which those labour, who would support the contrary hypothesis, “that the years of repose are to be supposed synonymous with the jurisdiction of the Judges,” is,

that they extend the period of life beyond the limits allotted to humanity. Pezron and Vossius appear to make little account of this objection, but even Marsham himself, who observed so many errors and inconsistencies in the scheme of Usher, (which calculated the reposes in retrospect, rather than in progression,) that he imagined the only means of avoiding them was to account the reposes consecutively, has afforded an eminent and striking instance of this oversight, which is alone sufficient to overthrow the authority of his system. He places the term of the judicature of Othniel A. J. P. 3374, 101 years, according to his own calculation, after the division of the land.* Does he forget, that Othniel must have been alive, and even come to man's estate, at that period, since Caleb soon after gave him his daughter in marriage, on his conquest of Kirjath Sepher? (Jos. 15-16. compared with Jud. 1. 13.) and we know that the period of marriage was later then than in after ages.† It follows, Othniel must have

* It is remarkable, however, he does not attribute the whole repose of 80 years to the government of Ehud. He, indeed, allots him but twenty years, "*Supponimus Jabinem mortuo Ehudo in Israelitas impetum fecisse circa annum ab expulsis Moabitis vicesimum.*" —(Sæc. xi. p. 306. quarto.) And if he does not *expressly* attribute the 40 years of the first repose to the judicature of Othniel, he does not, as in the case of Ehud, give us any reason to suppose he rejects the supposition, and, at least, he is partially subjected to our censure, since he *commences* his jurisdiction 65 years after the passage of the Jordan, when he must have been nearly, or perhaps above, an hundred years of age.

† Isaac and Esau married, when arrived at the age of 40. Pere Pezron has no objection to suppose Othniel lived 180 years, or even more.

have been near 140 years of age at his death. Would not, I demand, the Holy Scripture, which records Joshua to have been very "old and stricken in years," when he could not have yet reached a century; which mentions Gideon dying "*in good old age*," but much younger than Joshua; which relates the great age of Eli, so that he had even lost his sight at ninety years; which speaks of Jesse, the father of David, (1 Saml. 17-12.) as considered and respected in Israel as an aged man; which records, in like manner, the diminution of human life, in the days of Moses, even to seventy years; and which had taught the Israelites to look upon length of years as a peculiar mark of the favour of Heaven, (Deut. 11. v. 21.) (1 Saml. 2-32.); have dwelt on, or, at least, commemorated this prolonged existence? In vain will my adversaries array against me the authority of the text; it is evident, their mistake originates in their failing to distinguish two things, which are, however, clearly discriminated in the sacred historian, viz. the death of Othniel, and the period during which the land had rest from war. (Jud. 3. v. 11.) The Vulgate unites the latter part of the alledged verse with the beginning of the following, in this manner: "And Othniel, son of Kenaz, died, and the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord;" thus evidently distinguishing the period of repose, mentioned in the former verse, from the duration of his life, after his victory, which could not have

been long, on account of his great age when he obtained it. The 80 years attributed to Ehud are liable to the same objections, on grounds as irrefragable and evident, but more particularly on the hypothesis of Marsham and his followers, which admits, as we have seen, that *during* this *supposed* jurisdiction, the servitude under Jabin and the government of Barak took place, contrary to the express words of Scripture, that (Judg. 2. 17-18.) “the Lord delivered them from their enemies *all the days* of the Judge,” whom he had raised to defend them. Happily for the authority of the system I have adopted, the spirit and expression of Scripture itself, unite in this last instance, to confirm and establish it. The text (Judg. 3. 30.) informs us, that after the death of Eglon, “the land had rest 80 years;” and afterwards, in the first verse of the ensuing chapter, proceeds to relate, “and the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord, when Ehud was dead.” This should seem to be after the expiration of the 80 years mentioned before, as many have understood it, and accordingly have attributed that whole period to the jurisdiction of Ehud; but the last verse (v. 31.) of the preceding chapter expressly overthrows this supposition: it informs us, “*And after him, (Ehud) was Shamgar, the son of Anath, which slew of the Philistines six hundred men with an ox-goad, and he also delivered Israel.*” Here are all the requisite and usual descriptive terms, which are applied to the earlier Judges;
succession

succession after Ehud; opposition to the enemies of his country; and deliverance of his people—nothing can be more precise, consistent, and appropriate. His titles are so far recognized, that Josephus (Ant. 5-5.) assigns him one year of jurisdiction, while the *Chronicon Paschale*, and the *Chronicon Latinobarbarum*, published by Scaliger, extend his period to 24 or 25 years, which they retrench from the 80 usually attributed to Ehud, and grant to the latter but the remainder. But the Scripture is *silent* as to his government, rather I should say, *speaking* as to the truth and justice of our system.

1. Because, unquestionably, the period of one of the four first Judges or Deliverers is not mentioned in *any* manner, however equivocal or ambiguous.

2. Since his judicature intervenes between the conquest of Moab and the subjugation of Israel, (c. 4. v. 2.) to the king of Canaan, which the text assures us took place “*in consequence of the idolatry, (or rather vices,) of the people, after the death of Ehud*” we find, in this, as in the former instance of Othniel, that there is an express distinction drawn between repose and jurisdiction; the death of Ehud and the repose of 80 years being clearly contradistinguished. If not, how could the people require a new deliverer, during the life of their former chief? contrary to the text produced above. (Judges, 2-18.) Or, shall we be compelled to adopt the method of eluding the authority and expression of the historian,

torian, invented by Marsham and recognized by the marginal notes on the text, and suppose cotemporary Judges? The text itself, as we shall see in the sequel, would condemn us.

But another remark occurs here, still more decisive on this subject. It is that the supporters of the system, “that the repose means the jurisdiction of the deliverer,” are reduced to this alternative, that they are compelled to make the years of the succeeding servitude commence immediately after the death of each Judge, or to suppose an anarchy always succeeds it. The first is altogether indefensible, because the text, in every instance, expressly assures us, that it was the idolatry of the people that provoked the wrath of Heaven, and subjugated them to their enemies. But this relapse always requires time to be consummated, for, “the Almighty is slow to anger, and of great patience and long suffering;” or else, we are to suppose their idolatry uniformly commenced during the last years of the Judge who had saved them, on their former repentance, and who now tolerates their disobedience—a supposition contradicted as it is, in express terms by the text, (Jud. 2. 19.) that, I trust, will not be lightly hazarded. The second alternative only remains, that an anarchy always succeeded the term of each jurisdiction during which the people had time to relapse into idolatry—a position totally unsupported by Scripture or reason, and which at once abandons the series of sacred chronology to uncertainty, system, and caprice; and which, independent
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of the gratuitous assumption of its principle, we shall find, in the sequel, positively contradicted by facts. I trust it is now clear, that the jurisdiction of the Judge is not always to be understood as synonymous with the term of the repose. If it is, why does the sacred historian deviate from the consistency of his expression, and inform us that the land had rest forty years, "*in the days of Gideon?*" (Jud. 8. 28.) If the forty years repose was synonymous with the term of jurisdiction in every case, surely the additional sentence was inapplicable and redundant; evidently, at least, calculated to inspire hesitation and distrust, whether it ought to be understood in the former instances or not, which is quite inconsistent with the usual precision, clearness, and accuracy of the Jewish writings. But upon the hypothesis we adopt, which does not, until the time of Gideon, assign the periods of the Judges' authority, all this obscurity, misapprehension, and mistake is cleared away, every period becomes definite, harmonious and consistent, and the sense and expression of the sacred historian, is adhered to with scrupulous attention and fidelity; we discover a clear reason for his apparent deviation from usual terms; the precision of the text receives new demonstration and evidence; and the term "repose" acquires its natural and obvious meaning, as an interval between the epochs of warfare and hostility. And it is peculiarly observable, that, upon our system, we assign a period succeeding every deliverance, equivalent to the length of a generation, before

before Israel again provokes the wrath of Heaven, by relapsing into idolatry and disobedience; agreeably to the text, "And Israel served the Lord, all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that over-lived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the Lord that he had done for Israel," which, it is natural to suppose, equally influenced them in all future time.

It is now of importance to investigate the epoch and term of the 40 years repose, which the sacred text mentions to have succeeded the victory of Othniel, (Jud. 3-11.) This, agreeably to our first observation, must have had for its commencement a war that preceded it, viz. the conquest of Cushan, and for its term another war that followed, viz. that against the King of Moab, in which his authority was shaken off by the Israelites under the conduct of Ehud, the period of his oppression is evidently included in it, since it does not appear that this domination was resisted, until the final contest which took place after he was slain by Ehud. In effect, the text itself expressly assures us, that the king of Moab only possessed himself of the city of palm-trees, (Jud. 3-13-14.) and in the next verse, proceeds to relate that "the children of Israel sent a present," which in the eastern style is tribute,"* "to Eglon, and Ehud having slain him, summoned

* If authority is wanting for this, it is supplied by 11 Kings, 17-3. where "presents" in the text, are translated more agreeably to the Hebrew idiom, "tribute," in the margin, and many other places in the sacred writ, 1 Chron. 18-2. 11 Saml. 8-2.

summoned the men of Ephraim, and defeated the Moabites, which victory determined the first repose, and commences the second of 80 years. Usher, as we have seen, concludes the first repose with the victory of Othniel, computing it from the conquest of the land, which is at complete variance, both with his own proper principles and the authority of the sacred text; for it is plain from Scripture, (Judges, 1st passim.) that the wars of Caleb and the elders, which succeeded the death of Joshua, took place during these forty years, on his own hypothesis, and consequently the land had *not* rest, during that period, which objection I hold to be decisive against the reception of his theory.

The second repose, which commenced with the victory over the Moabites, concludes with the next warfare in which the Israelites were engaged, viz. that against Jabin, king of Hazor, who, having oppressed Israel 20 years, his domination began in the sixtieth year of this repose, for he also appears to have subjected the tribes, without any intervening hostility, that might have interrupted the repose; and his authority, like Eglon's, was only tribute and service, which does not determine the period of eighty years, agreeably to our second principle of interpretation.

But I must arrest myself to reply to an objection, that will be forwardly urged against this system. Is servitude, I am asked, synonymous with repose? Could the land enjoy rest, when it was enslaved? I answer yes: it enjoyed rest from

the evils of hostility and war, which is all my principles would go to establish. Will it not be granted to me, that the kingdoms of Judah and Israel, when they agreed to purchase off the vengeance of their Assyrian oppressors by tribute, were at peace? Under the 'Tirshatha or Assyrian satrap, that is, under subjection, was not the land at rest? When Zedekiah paid tribute to Nebuchadnezzar, for some years, the land enjoyed repose; when he refused it, and the country was exposed to the invasions of the enemy, the repose was terminated. Under the Persian monarchs also, when Israel prayed in the temple for the safety of their sovereigns, under the Seleucidæ, and under the Roman republic, was "the sceptre yet departed from Judah?" In fine, for it is needless to accumulate examples, when the church suffered the severity of persecution and proscription, it was analogous to the Jewish state, during the period of unsuccessful hostility; when it was legally established under Constantine, it enjoyed rest, although suffering under the common calamities of the empire, and that every intermission of active persecution was at least a comparative repose, is a mode of speech very familiar to the ecclesiastical writers. We have produced positive evidence that the first servitude was only tribute and service; we have another sufficiently strong in the history of Samson, where we find (Jud. 15-10.) the men of Judah remonstrating with the Philistines, "Why are ye come up against us." Urging, as it were, that they had performed all
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the conditions of servitude imposed upon them; and the Philistines, in their reply, acknowledge the force of the appeal, "We are come up," say they, "against Samson, to do unto him as he hath done unto us:" as if they said, "we wish to punish those only who deny our authority, or resist our dominion." In a word, when the children of Israel permitted the people of the land to remain as their tributaries, "and they dwelt among them to this day," says the text, (Jud. 1-15. & aliter passim) will it be denied, that those, although in subjection, enjoyed peace. The case will be perfectly analogous, if we should suppose those tributaries had their native Judges and sovereigns during the period of their subjection, and the annals of the nation might, like those of Israel, record their subjection to a foreign dominion at the same time that they should notice the circumstances of internal œconomy, and the hereditary, or elective, succession of their chiefs, and if we have no grounds from the silence of sacred history, to quote the instance as perfectly analogous, yet we have other accounts that amply supply the requisite examples. Moab and Edom were conquered by David, and remained tributary to his successors for a considerable period, during which we meet with the names of some of their sovereigns attending the kings of Israel and transmitting them tribute, (v. 11. Kings iii. pass.) should we not then suppose, that Israel, when subjected to their enemies, likewise possessed an internal jurisdiction and sovereignty, si-

milar to those of the other nations of the East, even if Scripture had not expressly, as we shall see in the sequel, assured us of the fact. It is therefore neither inconsistent nor false, to suppose the jurisdiction of the Judge, as in some instances, contemporaneous with the dominion of a foreign enemy. In a word, the genius of Asiatic conquest, more particularly in the earlier ages, never went to destroy or to alter the form of government, in the subjugated state:* it was limited to the imposition of tribute, and personal service, in the nature of a feudal fee, of which singular, or, perhaps, in an uncultivated age, natural policy, it would not be difficult to assign the probable causes, or to accumulate examples. The sacred volume affords us, many, and the instance of Deborah, which we are proceeding to examine, though sufficiently clear, is not the most express. It is a distinction which deserves to be remarked, between the character of a monarchial and that of any other form of government, when both are abandoned to their natural bias, uninfluenced by the casual effects of political and religious prejudices; and it will not, perhaps, be found an unfavourable feature in the moral aspect of the former. Thucidydes, and the Greek historians in general, sealed as their narrations are with the stamp of truth and verisimilitude, from the events of a later day, will supply the

* The inquisitive reader may consult, on this interesting subject, Ferishta, as translated by Dow, Xenophon, Cyr. and Anab. particularly the former, and above all, the judicious and learned Pref. of Richardson to his P. and A. Lexicon.

the broad lines of policy and practice which are requisite to fill up the contrast. It is now, I trust, sufficiently clear, that the period of the jurisdiction of the three first Judges is not assigned in scripture; that the term "*repose*," is not synonymous with "*jurisdiction*;" and that the second repose of 80 years concludes with the war against Jabin, king of Hazor, in which Israel shook off his dominion. The history of this servitude, and of the subsequent revolt, as it is related to us, affords a very striking confirmation of the observations we have just submitted, and of the system we adopt. The text, (Judg. 4. 4. 5. &c.) having recorded the oppression of Jabin, for 20 years, (v. 3.) proceeds to relate, "And Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at that time," viz. during the dominion of Sisera and his sovereign, as (if there could be any doubt,) is plain from the following verses, (5. 6.) in which the children of Israel are represented as "coming up to her for judgment," when she selected Barak, the son of Abinoam, to be *their deliverer*. Summoning the tribes of Napthali and Zebulun, he completely defeated Sisera, (v. 15.) and pursued the course of his success until the sovereign and the kingdom of Hazor were "completely destroyed," (v. 24.); and, in fact, from this period, the Canaanites appear to have made no further opposition to the dominion or prosperity of Israel. It was in commemoration of this signal success, that Deborah composed the hymn of praise, in which she relates, in the most sublime
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and elevated language, the triumphs of her country and her religion, and which is also valuable as affording a just idea of the state of the federal republic of Israel, and a picture of the earlier manners of the neighbouring nations. But we are at present only interested in it, in an historical point of view, and as affording what I conceive to be forcible evidence in support of our theory. Contrasting the flourishing state of her country, after the victory of Barak, with the effects of a foreign domination, she says, (chap. 5. v. 6. 7. 8.) “ In the days of Shamgar, son of Anath, in the days of Jael, the high-ways were unoccupied ; the travellers walked through by-ways ; the inhabitants of the villages ceased ; they chose new gods. Was there a shield or spear seen among forty thousand in Israel ? ” We behold here, Deborah explicitly acknowledging Shamgar as a Judge, or deliverer, of the people ; she recognizes his succession to Ehud, and thereby establishes the observations which I have made before on the subject of his jurisdiction. Bishop Patrick, in his commentary on this passage, would read, “ *From* the days of Shamgar, &c.” which undoubtedly appears to be the just construction, since the text itself, (c. 3. 31.) informs us, “ and he also delivered Israel,” which is not very compatible with the description of the state of the country, during his jurisdiction, afforded in the hymn of Deborah. Adopting, then, the correction of the learned bishop, we find that the country was disarmed (v. 8.) by the policy of the oppressors, (of which policy we may remark other examples, (1 Sam. 13. v. 19. 20. 21.)

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after the period of Shamgar's jurisdiction; that there was no resistance opposed to the invaders, and that the Israelites, to conciliate their enemies, had adopted the idolatry and worship they professed; that therefore the servitude under Jabin is to be included in the repose of 80 years after the conquest of Moab; and that the duties of the avenging deliverer are often distinct and separate from those of the legal magistracy, or authorized Judges of the state, as we shall afterwards explain more particularly, under the article of Samson. Deborah expressly mentions those "that sit in judgment," as distinct and separate from the conquering chieftain, who had led the tribes to victory, (v. 10.) In effect, the first Judges, as they are denominated, appear to be rather leaders to deliver Israel from her oppressors, than legislators to expound the law, or to dispense judgment among the people. We have seen a woman exercising this office, and Israel bowing to her jurisdiction. The text informs us she was a Prophetess, which perhaps explains the nature of her authority and influence. She was resorted to from her supposed knowledge of the law of Moses, derived from the nature and superiority of the qualifications with which she was endowed. It was the legitimate empire of science and reason she possessed; and the spontaneous submission of her countrymen is the most honourable testimony to the value of these acquisitions; in like manner, we find Huldah, the Prophetess, appealed to, even under the established government
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of the sovereign, her opinion respected and her authority allowed. The Arabic records furnish us also, with a parallel and analogous instance: the wife of "the Prophet," we are informed, for many years acted as supreme arbitrator and Judge of the national disputes, on account of her supposed knowledge of the law, and meaning of her husband. In fact, in our commentary and interpretation of scripture, the analogy of eastern manners, and the subsidiary rays deducible from Asiatic history, should never be out of sight: it affords us a clue to many points irreconcilable to merely European ideas; and the success of a work conducted on this principle, in happily elucidating many important circumstances in the sacred writings, is the best criterion of its advantages. It will be easily seen I allude to "Burder's Oriental Customs."

Perhaps we may attribute much of the obscurity and disagreement, which has arisen on the state of this period of the Hebrew records, to a misconception of a passage in which the term "Judges," and "deliverers," is used as synonymous. It is not to be denied, that the chieftain, who had avenged his country on their enemies, might, in many circumstances, have also executed the duties of civil jurisdiction; and, undoubtedly, if he had been one of the authorized Judges, who appear, from the hymn of Deborah, to have been continued in the state, perhaps from the original election of Moses, (Ex. 19. v. 20. 21.) he would have, after his victory, persevered in the discharge of his function.

function. Perhaps most of the avengers may have been of the class of the civil Judges, and that, as is usual in many cases, the term being generalized, outran the idea, and was applied to them all indiscriminately. The verse (Jud. 2. 16.) which I have alluded to, is as follows; "Nevertheless, the Lord raised up Judges, which delivered [*margin*, "saved,"] them out of the hand of those that spoiled them." It is evident, from the sequel of the history, that many of the Judges did *not* deliver Israel, for their countrymen were not oppressed during their administration, as Tola, Abimelech, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon. It is evident, also, that the term "Judges," applied to the deliverer, or the description "judged Israel," does not occur, except in one instance, until after the time of Tola. Ehud is not mentioned to have judged Israel; Deborah judged Israel, as we have seen, *during the third servitude*; and Barak is not recorded to have judged Israel, or rather, he is expressly distinguished from the Judges, (Jud. 5. 10.); Gideon, the fifth avenger, after his conquest of the Midianites, and his refusal of the sovereignty, (Jud. 8. 23.) "went and dwelt in his own house," (v. 29.); but he seems to have possessed a local jurisdiction in his own tribe. They were all deliverers, and, as such, enjoyed influence and authority, but not exclusive jurisdiction. The exception is that of Othniel: "the spirit of the Lord came upon him, and *he judged Israel*, and went out to war." (Jud. 3. 10.) It should seem from this, that the proper term,

“Judge,” in so much as it was synonymous with “deliverer,” merely referred to his military jurisdiction and decision, as leader of the host; and that it was not till after the time of Tola, it assumed a more appropriate, definite, and precise signification, as the dispenser of civil justice among the people. Thus, we find, that among the Carthaginians, whose suffetes are evidently similar to, and perhaps derived from the Hebrew sophetim, or Judges, Hannibal, grandson of the first Hamilcar, possessed the office of suffete, when he went on the Sicilian expedition; and the great Hannibal, when he was setting out on the Spanish war, was created one of the same magistrates. (Vide Rollin, vol. 1. 254. 312. and auctores eo citatos, Ed. Dundee, 1800.) Perhaps, the civil powers of the Judge were conferred on the leader of the host, when he had not before possessed them, to consolidate his authority and influence among the troops; at least, it appears clearly, there is no ground from the text to understand the terms, “Judge,” and “deliverer,” as *completely* synonymous, and thence to deduce the inference, that the period of repose and jurisdiction is the same—a supposition founded on a further misapprehension of the text, (Jud. 2. 18.) in which it is said, “And when the Lord had raised them up Judges, then the Lord was with the Judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the Judge,” which is by no means inconsistent with the principles of our theory, for we have shewn, that, in the case of Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar,
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and Gideon, the life of the Judge is clearly distinguished from the period of the repose, and concluded before it. (Vide *supra* and Judg. c. 3. v. 11. 30. 31. c. 8. 28. 33.) It is not useless to have entered so much at large into this subject, since it is to a misconception of the principles it unfolds, that the variety of opinion, the obscurity, and the uncertainty attending the history of the earlier ages of the Jewish republic, should undoubtedly be referred. Indeed, a consideration of the very next verse to that quoted above, would demonstrate the error of those who have so misunderstood the former, (v. 19.) “And it came to pass, when the Judge was dead, that they returned and corrupted themselves more than their fathers, in following other gods, they ceased not from their own doings, or from their stubborn ways.” Must not this relapse, this idolatry, this provocation to the vengeance of Heaven, require time, perseverance, habitude? “*Nemo repente turpissimus.*” Yet those who adopt the contrary hypothesis, commence their idolatry and their servitude in the very year of the death of their last deliverer—a position, on the extravagance of which I have already remarked. What? is it to be supposed that the people of Israel wait with deference and respect for the death of Othniel, at 150 years; or of Ehud, at, perhaps, 130, to commence the open practice of idolatry? or, that the nations who surround them, uniformly put off the day of vengeance and punishment, during the life of an exhausted old man, and immediately commence

hostilities, on his dissolution? Such are the conclusions to which the suppositions of our adversaries, contradicted as they are by the spirit and tenor of the text, would unavoidably conduct us. But the conclusion is their own; it is no more the conclusion of Scripture than it is the conclusion of reason; and it must afford the most unqualified satisfaction to the liberal and candid mind, to discover, that under the most accurate and discriminating analysis, the most trivial expression, the most isolated allusion, appears to have its due measure of design, intention, and importance; nothing is redundant or strained; nothing, when duly weighed, inconsistent or contradictory; the light, the harmony, and the union of the parts, is equally reciprocal and beautiful; nothing can be unnecessary when its value, if not intrinsic, is re-active; if not *sui generis*, it is relative; is effectual to prove, if not to guide; to direct, if not to inform.

The hymn of Deborah, also, affords us decisive arguments against the reception of the system, which would adhere to the interval assigned in the Book of Kings, by supposing some of the first Judges to be contemporary. We have seen the Prophetess acknowledge the election and authority of Shamgar, who was, according to Marsham's system, Judge in the West, on the side of the Philistines, whom he repulsed and "delivered Israel;" while the judicature of Deborah and Barak is confined to the most Northerly parts of Israel, divided, by almost the whole latitude of the country, from the
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territory of the Philistines. Now the punishment of Israel, in the servitude under Sisera, was in consequence of their apostacy and disobedience “ *after the death of Ehud,*” (Jud. 3. 1.) who had conquered the Moabites on the most Easterly frontier, so that Deborah, in the North, recognized Shamgar in the West, as a legitimate Judge, and the text expressly relates that the defection meriting the punishment of Israel from the Northern independent states, took place after the death of the Judge, who had conquered in the East; which seems clearly to indicate, that the Judges were successive, and their services universally acknowledged and generally effectual. And the complaint against the several tribes who refused to assist in the war against Hazor evidently supposes that, as the oppression was common to *them* all, the danger should have been equally so, (v. 17.) “ Gilead abode beyond Jordan, Dan remained in ships, Asher continued on the sea-shore and abode in his breaches,” while “ Zebulun and Napthali jeoparded their lives,” (v. 18.) “ Reuben dwelt among the sheep-folds,” (v. 15. 16.) but Issachar joined Barak, (v. 15.) and Ephraim and Benjamin were also his auxiliaries, (v. 14.) So that almost all the tribes of Israel are mentioned as useful auxiliaries, or as faithless neutrals in this war. It is to be observed also, that Reuben, whose dissensions and infidelity to the common cause is lamented with so much force and pathos, is upon the borders of Moab, and, of course, would be subjected to

to the jurisdiction of Ehud, who had delivered Israel from the dominion of Eglon, and to whom Marsham allots the Eastern tribes. Gilead is also to the East; while Dan is directly on the Philistine frontier, and should consequently have been under the authority of Shamgar, to whom the Western tribes are supposed to have been obedient; yet those are the tribes who refused assistance to their oppressed countrymen. Is it to be supposed, this could have happened under the authority, or during the lives of the chiefs who had been raised by the signal providence of God, to deliver and to defend them? Or, is it not rather a full, forcible, and decisive argument in favour of the principles of interpretation we have adopted. The servitudes were undoubtedly partial, as the apostacy of the tribes must have been: the Moabites, for example, oppressed, as we have proved, only the Eastern tribes; the Philistines, usually, only the Western; and the king of Hazor's dominion more particularly affected the Northern states. But the *avengers* were successive, and the fruits of their success was beneficial to the whole confederacy, in preserving their liberty and prosperity, and in manifesting the more particular protection of Heaven, in the triumphs of their leaders. It is also clear, that the power of the first Judges was merely personal, although their illustrious exploits afforded an epoch for the national annals to synchronize or refer to, as we find the act of Jael, in killing Sisera, celebrated in the hymn of Deborah, with the triumph or the jurisdiction of Shamgar.

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In a word, I trust the positions, and rules of interpretation, which I have premised, are, at least in the case of the five first Judges, so clearly proved, that we may, without difficulty, assume them in our future observations. I shall only add one elucidation farther, on this subject: if the periods of repose are synonymous with those of jurisdiction, to what epoch are those ages when "there was no king [more properly 'rulers,'] in Israel, and every man did as was right in his own eyes," to be assigned? The sacred text is careful to record that, at the commencement of Micha's idolatry, and the defection of the tribe of Dan, there was no established or legitimate government, as some apology or extenuation for those acts. It is hence evident, that they cannot be ascribed to the government of the elders, because "all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that over-lived Joshua, Israel served the Lord." (Jos. 24. 31. Jud. 2. 7.) Nor can they be attributed to the period of the servitudes, because some of those events suppose not only internal peace, as the journey of Levite; but external success, as the final settlement of Dan, which, more particularly as the unassisted act of a single tribe, could not have taken place during the *jurisdiction of Joshua or Caleb; and the mention of it in the Book of Joshua (19. 47.) is evidently posterior to the division
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* This will be easily conceded, when we recollect that Joshua refused to permit Caleb, to conquer his inheritance alone, but joined him with the force of all the tribes, in his attempt.

of the land, as the first verse of the chapter in which it is related, clearly proves, (Jud. 18. 1.) “until that day, their inheritance had not fallen to them among the tribes of Israel.” and “that day,” we find from the sequel, was contemporary with the idolatry of Micha. The internal jurisdiction manifested by the assembling of the tribes at Mizpeh, is also destructive of the supposition, that it was during a period of servitude. Where, then, can they be placed, except in the interval of repose after the death of the first avengers, and the commencement of the subsequent captivity, as after the conquest of Chusan, which Othniel could not long survive, or of Eglon, which, perhaps, Ehud survived fifteen or twenty years, and thus leave the remainder of the 80 years repose for the captivity of Jabin, and for the period “in which there was no king or ruler in Israel.” On the point also, that the periods of servitude may be included in those of repose, agreeably to our second principle of interpretation, I would remark that the accuracy, the precision, and the fidelity, with which, in the whole course of the Jewish records the numerical items both of the armies assembled; and more particularly of their own loss, in the chance of defeat, and of the enemies, in case of victory; the notice taken of the different geographical points in which the hostile, or the national forces, were collected, or opposed; the allusions, or more enlarged detail of the choice of leaders, and of the dubious circumstances of the war; the recapitulation of the several chieftains, who, in
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the different periods of their history, had either led the hosts to triumph, or incurred, by their obstinacy and disobedience, the penalties of defeat; the facts which seem to indicate, that the earlier servitudes were merely local, partial, and confined, while the dissensions of the remaining tribes, or their negligence of the common cause, or the more remote pressure of the danger, prevented them from assisting their countrymen, and thereby endangering their own unattempted prosperity and peace; and, above all, the evident design of the sacred historian, “to write all things for our ensample,” and, of course, to dwell more particularly on the dreadful punishments of rebellion and idolatry, whenever they should occur, and thereby to offer a perpetual commentary on the denunciations, as well the promises of God, (Deut. 28 *passim*. part. v. 25.); all these considerations are to me decisive evidence, that if any hostilities had occurred, before the periods of the several servitudes we have been examining, they would have been distinctly related, and individually detailed; but the very circumstance of disarming the land; and the imposition of tribute; the apparent hopelessness of relief; the consequent indifference and despair, so often manifested to the public welfare, are incontrovertible arguments against it. But, in effect, if the arguments I have submitted, to prove that “repose,” and “jurisdiction,” are not synonymous, are allowed to have any weight, the very text and authority which is usually urged for the contrary hypothesis, may be produced

as a forcible argument, that the first servitudes are to be included in the periods of repose, (Jud. 2. 18. 19.) For, we are assured, “the Lord delivered them from the hands of their enemies,” only “*all the days* of the Judge;” but, after the death of the Judge, they were delivered into the power of the surrounding nations, without, as we have seen, resistance or hostility intervening, *or* before the repose concludes. The terms, also, generally used, “the Lord delivered Israel into the hands,” &c. &c. “the Lord sold the children of Israel,” &c. and the dreadful denunciations against disobedience, (Deut. 28. 25. &c.) seem to infer, that the punishment was equally prompt and inevitable, and that even the glory, equivocal as it might be of resistance, was not permitted to give relief or elevation to their misfortunes.

We shall now proceed to the next period, according to the text. After the death of the last avenger, and the usual forgetfulness of the mercy and the providence of God, which generally took place in the course of a generation, “the Lord (Jud. 6. 1.) delivered Israel into the hands of Midian, seven years, and the circumstances of the oppression are distinctly marked; the severity of it also, forms a new feature in the history. It does not seem to have been the servitude of tribute, for “because of the Midianites, the children of Israel made them the dens which are in the mountains, and caves, and strong holds; and so it was, when Israel had sown, that the Midianites came up, and the Amalekites, and the children

children of the East, and destroyed the increase of the earth, until they came to Gaza, and left no sustenance for Israel, neither sheep, nor ox, nor ass."* (6. 3. 4.) This severe and unprecedented oppression, continued during seven years, until Israel, in its distress, "cried unto the Lord," (v. 7.); and he raised up Gideon, to be their deliverer. The circumstances of the war are narrated with minuteness and precision, and the consequence of this great deliverance, "That Midian could lift up their heads no more," is amply verified in the sequel of the history, in which we find no further mention of hostilities between Israel and Midian, "And the country was in quietness *forty years, in the days of Gideon.*" (c. 8. v. 2.) This is a period so unambiguous and defined, that I cannot conceive on what principle the learned Usher allots him but nine years.

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* This was a most remarkable consummation of the prophetic denunciations, declaring the penalties of disobedience. Deut. 28. 31. 33. 38. 39. 40.

"31. Thine ox shall be slain before thine eyes, and thou shalt not eat thereof: thine ass shall be violently taken away from before thy face, and shall not be restored to thee: thy sheep shall be given unto thine enemies, and thou shalt have none to rescue them.

"33. The fruit of thy land, and all thy labours, shall a nation, which thou knowest not, eat up; and thou shalt be only oppressed, and crushed away.

"40. Thou shalt have olive trees throughout all thy coasts, but thou shalt not anoint thyself with the oil: for thine olive shall cast his fruit.

"42. All thy trees, and the fruit of thy land, shall the locust consume."

And it is a further confirmation of the observations we have presented above, for here certainly is no hint of opposition or resistance, although this oppression was so unusually severe; and surely, as the circumstances of punishment and oppression are narrated with such exactitude and minuteness in this case, they would not have been neglected in the preceding, if any had occurred similar or analogous.

The history of Gideon, however, affords another evidence in favour of our hypothesis, concerning the three first periods and the first avengers of Israel. We find, first, that Midian made war against the children of Israel and subjugated part of the tribes, (for the expression (c. 6. v. 2.) “the caves which are in the mountains,” seems to mean “now visible there,” and, of course, that it was those tribes who inhabited the vicinity of the mountainous parts that were principally subjugated,*) which is not related of the former servitudes; therefore, *they* must have been distinct, viz. only of tribute and service. And, secondly, (c. 8. 22.) the people, grateful for the ability and valour which had saved them, call on their avenger to rule over them,† and to transmit the power to his descendants, which certainly implies, that in the case of the preceding Judges, no such power was possessed or exercised, in consequence of their deliverance, or that, in other words, *they* only enjoyed the reputation and honour due to their exploits, without exercising the duties of judicature and authority, and consequently, that the duration of the three first
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* It should seem, also, those caves were, perhaps, the same that, during the reign of Saul, afforded an asylum to the Israelites, in his first war against the Philistines. (Saml. 13. 6.)

† The excessive and unusual severity of this oppression was, probably, a primary cause of the singular gratitude of the people. Besides, the providence of Heaven had been *more remarkably* displayed in their late *miraculous* deliverance; and perhaps, too, the experience of the evils of civil dissention and anarchy, which had been so strongly exemplified in the course of the war, contributed not a little to their consent and proposal.

reposes cannot properly be referred to the continuance of their power.

After the death of Gideon, Abimelech, his son, succeeded to his authority, for three years, upon the slaughter of his 70 brethren, (another argument for allotting to Gideon 40 years.) Could Usher suppose, that he who was a young man "in his father's house," when he was called to redeem Israel, would have 70 children, and some of them of man's estate, in nine years, more especially, as the text itself informs us, (8. 32.) "he died in good old age?"

"After him, (c. 10. 1.) there arose to defend Israel, Tola, son of Puah, son of Dodo, during 23 years."

Here commences a distinct manner of expression, which is afterwards properly adhered to. Every future ruler *judged* Israel, and his period of authority is marked. It is not difficult to assign the cause of this. Israel had now been accustomed to a partially acknowledged authority, for 43 years, during the lives of Gideon, and his son, who is implied to have been elected by his countrymen, out of respect to the memory and deliverance of his father; and the people had experienced the advantages of this alteration so far, that in future, they adhered to it.

Jair succeeded Tola for 22 years, including in it the 18 years oppression of the Amorites; for we read (c. 10. v. 8.) and "that year they oppressed Israel 18 years," viz. those, says the text, which were "beyond Jordan, in the land of the Amorites, which is in Gilead."

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This appears to me evidently to mean, that in the last year of Jair, they had already oppressed Gilead 18 years, and the text proceeds to relate, "that Ammon passed over Jordan to fight against Judah, Benjamin, and Ephraim, so that Israel was sore distressed," which I thus interpret, that *after* having oppressed Gilead 18 years, to the last year of Jair, they *then* joined and passed the Jordan, to subjugate the other adjacent tribes. This will explain to us (v. 10. 18.) the account of the "*princes and people of Gilead*" assembling to select a chief and leader, viz. in the room of Jair, who was a Gileadite; for if the 18 years of servitude followed his death, how could the people be *that year* united in opposition to their enemies, and assembled for the purposes of legislation? But by the other hypothesis which I adopt, it is sufficiently clear, that the Ammonites, invading the trides on the other side of the Jordan, the year of Jair's death, those tribes rose to repel the invaders, and Gilead revolted upon the prospect of assistance from their brethren; for the text continues the narration, "Israel encamped at Mizpeh against the Ammonites in Gilgal." Jephthah, their countryman, was the choice of the princes, and elected their chief; he delivered them from their enemies, and "judged Israel six years." (Jud. 16. 7.) Two arguments are almost decisive for this interpretation of the text: first, the continuance of the Israelites in the belief and worship of the true God, will be, on the contrary system, very contradictory to the invariable tenor of their former habits

habits and conduct; fifty-five years, during the jurisdiction of Tolah and Jair, and some few at least after the death of the latter, of fidelity and virtue, before their total apostacy, together with the period of Abimelech, and the long continued peace and tranquillity, during the life of Gideon; this would be, indeed, an example of perseverance in fidelity, obedience, and virtue, almost irreconcilable to the character, and perhaps to the circumstances of this extraordinary and infatuated people. It would almost certainly expose the hypothesis which would support such an unprecedented course of religious and practical perseverance, to just hesitation and mistrust, from the whole analogy of history and Scripture, if we had been even left to analogy alone, to guide or to govern us; but happily, in this, as in many other instances, the sense and expression of Scripture is equally clear and decisive, in favour of our hypothesis. We are informed, (Jud. 8. 27.) that all Israel were perverted to idolatry, by the ephod “which Gideon had made and placed in Ophrah, his own city;” and more particularly in the sequel, (v. 33.) “And it came to pass, *as soon as Gideon was dead*, that the children of Israel turned *again*, and made Baal-berith their God.” The next chapter appears to confine *this* latter defection to the worship of Baal to the city of Shechem, and relates the severe punishment which God inflicted on them by the hand of Abimelech, whom they had aided in his usurpation. But the idolatry of the ephod in Ophrah, and the worship
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of Baalim, with which they were so often reproached, and which also, they adopted after the death of Gideon, (v. 33.) remained yet unpunished. And as the principles I adopt always admit the interval of a generation, to consummate the apostacy of Israel, and merit the vengeance of the Almighty, this period is properly supplied by the 30 years that intervene, between the death of Gideon and the fourth year of Jair, in which I hold the eighteen years of the oppression of the Ammonites to have commenced; and it is further observable, that the contemporaries of the conquest of Midian must have generally disappeared, as this generation may have been their grandsons, agreeably to the course and observation of Scripture. (Jud. 2. 10. Exod. 1. 1.)

Secondly. We must otherwise admit an anarchy after the death of Jair, to allow time for the general apostacy of Israel, related in the text, (chap. x. 6.);—a supposition which we have already, in general, rejected, and which the sequel will prove *demonstratively* false, if the very fact of the assembling of the people, to elect a chief in his room, did not sufficiently expose its absurdity. It is true, the death of Jair is mentioned before the particulars of the apostacy of Israel are recorded; but we have seen already, that the death of the chief is a very distinct thing from the commencement or the duration of a servitude; and it is observable, that it is not mentioned “*after* the death of Jair,” the people relapsed, as is said in so many other instances, but only “*again*,” which

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is by no means synonymous. It may refer to the usual introduction and prelude to the history of any oppression or servitude, which it naturally precedes, as cause precedes effect; or it may be used as a term to signify that *this* succeeded the defection last recorded; or it may be still more probably only a more enlarged statement of the defection related to have taken place after the death of Gideon—an apostacy which the justice and the denunciation of Heaven were equally concerned to punish and to avenge, but on which there is no mention of any chastisement being inflicted, till the oppression we are examining took place. The rebellion being after the death of Gideon, was during the judicature of Tolah, and the measure of iniquity being completed, and the long-suffering mercy of Heaven finally exhausted, the oppression took place under the government of Jair. It is the genius and the character of the Eastern writers, (and perhaps, generally of antiquity,) to anticipate, to unite, and to coalesce all the circumstances and events relating to a single individual, or a single occurrence in their narration. The sacred historian has been just recording the family, the influence, the possessions, and the government of Jair; the length of his jurisdiction, and the circumstances of his death naturally unite with these, and they are as naturally conjoined in his family panegyric and memoir. He is proceeding on a separate field, and he will not break or interrupt the course of his future narration, to record what seems to him to have been more

more properly anticipated before. But again, Gilead and the country beyond Jordan, is clearly expressed to have been subjugated eighteen years before the invasion of the trans-fluviatic tribes. (c. 10. v. 8. 9.) To what are we to attribute this cautious reserve, this restrained hostility for so long a period? On the hypothesis of my adversaries, I know not; but, on my own, it seems consistent and analogous, that the death of Jair, and the consequent jealousy, dissention, and anarchy, usual before the election of a successor; and the want of unanimity and conduct, natural to such a period, should have inspired the enemy with hopes of an easy and bloodless conquest.

Jeptah reckons from the conquest of the Amorites to his time, three hundred years, (11. 26.) The Amorites were conquered in the fortieth year of the exod, and this gives us an irresistible argument in favour of our system. In fact, no other hypothesis satisfies the supputation equally well, as will be visible from my table, in the sequel. Usher allows 263 years, by the help of abridging Joshua to 6 years, and Gideon to nine, both of which, as we have seen, are contradictory to the spirit and expression of the sacred historian, and therefore cannot be admitted. Marsham has accomplished 278 by similar conjecture and supposition equally arbitrary and unsupported. It will be seen, that we have approached on just and defensible grounds to the calculus; which fully establishes the arguments we have already urged for the three first reposes, and for including the 18 years of
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the Amorites' oppression in the jurisdiction of Jair. If we were to reckon regularly the reposes and servitudes in exclusive succession,* rather than in inclusive, we should find a number much exceeding that of Jephthah, and which of course he would have used as making more in favour of his argument, drawn from a long possession of the country, and concluding from *that* an indefeasible right to it. But it is singularly remarkable, that if we subduct the periods of servitude and oppression, by including them, as I have done, in the duration of the preceding reposes, or in the government of the Judges, (as in the case of Jair,) the calculus completely answers; the system, therefore, must be founded in fact. But we may also remark, that the princes of Gilead, when assembled to elect a chief to lead them against the Ammonites, can only promise "he shall be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead," (10. v. 18.); which is a strong confirmation of the opinion we have delivered on the nature and confined limits of the jurisdiction of the Judges. The civil war against Ephraim (c. xii.) proves, that in the first instance, at least, his authority was disputed.

After Jephthah, Ibsan, Elon, and Abdon, judged Israel respectively, 7, 10, and 8 years which afford no difficulty,

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* The calculus would amount to above three hundred years, from the commencement of Othniel, without including the jurisdiction of Joshua and the elders, the length of the generation succeeding the conquerors of the land, or the servitude of Cushan. Vignoles is compelled to reckon 363 years.

but supply an answer which we have already stated, against the system of Marsham.

The remaining numbers of the calculus present some nice questions which we shall endeavour to elucidate. "The Lord," says the text, "delivered Israel into the hands of the Philistines 40 years," and it proceeds to mention the circumstances of the birth of Samson, of whom it was foretold by an angel, "he should *begin* to deliver Israel," and (c. 15. 50.) "he judged Israel in the *days of the Philistines*, (c. 17. 31.) twenty years. His birth, then, was foretold in the beginning of the servitude, and he was, perhaps, about 16 or 18 years of age when the spirit of the Lord began to move him, (14. 25.) in the camp of Dan, which shews, that there was opposition to the Philistine oppression, at least from his own tribe.*

It does not appear that he led any army against the enemy. His exertions were personal, and his country, during all his life, oppressed, (c. 14. v. 4.) even so far that the tribe of Judah endeavoured to deliver him to their enemies; so that he is rather, like Shamgar, to be looked upon in the light of an avenger than a Judge, or interpreter of the law. The high priest, Eli, appears to have discharged the legislative functions

* Bishop Patrick, (in loco,) and some other interpreters, I know, understand the "camp of Dan," mentioned in the text, as the name of a place called Mahaneh Dan, the same that occurs in another passage in this book (18. 12.); and the circumstances of its situation appear to warrant their opinion. But the other translation is more generally received, and whichever is adopted will be of little consequence to the chronology of the period.

functions of the Judge, and the forty years which are attributed to him, (1. Saml. 4. 18.) are parallel and contemporaneous to the twenty of Samson, which I thus prove:

Samson, at his death, had destroyed the whole assembly of the Philistine lords. This was the beginning of redeeming Israel from their enemies, which had been foretold of him. We next hear, (in Samuel, c. 4. v. 1.) that the children of Israel went out against the Philistines; which I should interpret to mean, that after the signal destruction of *their* leaders by Samson, Israel revolted. Since it is quite inconsistent and anomalous to suppose such an event, in their favour, would be overlooked; this war concluded in the taking of the ark, and the death of Eli; which, of course, happened in the same, or the year following the death of Samson. The contrary opinion would be subject to inextricable difficulties: it would suppose, that Israel had not taken advantage of the destruction atchieved in their favour by Samson; or it would suppose, that Samson, by that act, had accomplished their deliverance,* contrary to the declaration

* Syncellus and the Chronicon Paschale seem to adopt this latter alternative, in granting 40 years of profound peace and interregnum between the death of Samson, and the commencement of Eli. The Chronicon Orientale, published by Abraham Ecchellensis, grants to this imaginary interval of repose, only 8 years, both equally unsupported by Scripture or by reason; but such are the gratuitous and arbitrary suppositions to which those are obliged to recur, who would reject the authority of the text, or lengthen the interval from the exod. (vide Syncellus, Chron. Pas. ut supra et Chron. Orientale cura Ecchellensis, Paris 1685.)

tion of the Angel, that he should only “*begin* to deliver Israel out of the hands of the Philistines;” or, it would suppose, thirdly, an hiatus in the sacred history, which we can by no means admit. But there is also another argument, which may be adduced, destructive of any contrary system. The sacred history expressly assigns to the dominion of the Philistines forty years—of these, Samson judged Israel 20 years; he could not have commenced his functions of an avenger, or Judge, until he had attained the age of 16 or 18 years;* so that this death falls in with the thirty-eighth or thirty-ninth year of the Philistine oppression, his birth being after its commencement. It follows, therefore, that it was about the period of Samson’s death and great revenge on the Philistines, that Israel endeavoured to shake off the dominion
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* However, it would perhaps enable us to avoid many perplexing and dubious questions, which might arise on this period of the Sacred History, if we should adopt the ingenious supposition of Whiston, and understand the term, “the days of the Philistines,” with some latitude, as including the whole period from their former invasion, in conjunction with the Ammonites, to the final emancipation of Israel by Samuel; which would permit us to place the birth of Samson under the jurisdiction of one of the Judges succeeding Jephthah, perhaps in that of Abdon, the latter years of whom were probably disturbed by their incursions, previous to their general invasion and oppression, in the year of his death. The idea of Whiston certainly receives something of verisimilitude, and support, when we recollect, that there is no mention of any other servitude, or oppression, except that of the Philistines, from the jurisdiction of Jephthah until the invasion of Nahash, in the first year of Saul, and, of course, the fears of the Israelites, as well as their hopes of deliverance, would be necessarily directed to, and exhausted on the oppression of this formidable enemy. (Vide, Dissertation on the Chronology of Josephus, prefixed by Whiston to his translation of the Jewish historian.

of their enemies and united against them, (Saml. c. 4. v. 1.) If it was not, what becomes of the intervening period?—of the express words of Scripture, that the Philistines only oppressed Israel 40 years, and that Samson only *began* their deliverance? We have already accounted for 36 or 38 years of their domination: Did, then, the 40 years conclude without any providential interference or heaven-inspired deliverance? Or, are we to suppose the chain and series of Scripture chronology mutilated and broken? Or, are we not rather to adopt the natural, obvious, and unobjectionable interpretation of the sacred text, and determine the forty years of the Philistine oppression by the victory of Samuel, at Mizpeh? The death of Eli coincides with the thirty-eighth or thirty-ninth year, the same, or that immediately succeeding, the death of Samson. The ark abode seven months in the country of the enemy, which brings us to the thirty-ninth or fortieth year; and Israel recovered under the conduct of Samuel, in the fortieth year. Thus the *ecclesiastical* jurisdiction of Eli commenced two or three years before the oppression of the Philistines, and includes the years of Samson, which was by no means unusual or unprecedented, as we have already seen that Samson was more properly an avenger than a Judge. As Deborah and Barak appear to have exercised authority together; as, the sons of Eli and Samuel are constituted assistant or auxiliary Judges, during *their* immediate jurisdiction; as, Eli, himself seems, in his remonstrance with his sons,

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to separate the offices of Judge and leader, which latter probably they possessed from the period of their original appointment, as well as at their death, (Saml. 2. 25.); and as, in fine, we observe the duties of the leader of the army and those of the judges clearly defined and distinguished, not only in the example of Moses, constituting Joshua leader of the host, and retaining to himself the legislative jurisdiction, but also afterwards, when Moses was dead, we find Joshua represented surrounded by his "Judges and officers," and the "*Judges standing at the side of the ark*," (Jos. c. 8. v. 33. and c. 24. v. 1.) as religious functionaries or interpreters of the law.

But this means of interpretation affords us another advantage, not to be overlooked—it explains the reason of a difference in the reading of the text, observed by many chronologists and commentators. Several of the ancient MS. and versions particularly the Sixtine edition of the Septuagint, grant only 20 years to Eli; and Eusebius* and Procopius
concur

* Eusebius, it must be admitted, in another Work, grants Eli the forty years assigned in Scripture, and Procopius acknowledges the Hebrew allotted him forty years. Syncellus, p. 175. (Edit. Goar. Par. 1652.) accuses Eusebius of inconsistency, in granting 40 years to Eli, "*contrarium pollicitus*," &c. says he, in the language of his translator. He himself, although enlarging the interval between the exod and foundation of the temple, adheres to the Septuagint, and accounts only 20 years to Eli. Nicephorus (ad calcem Syncelli,) likewise grants him but 20 years, and diminishes the oppression of the Philistines also to the same term, *εἴρη, x.*" The very learned Petavius, (vide Pet. Doc. temponum vol. 2. p. 60. in Bibliotheca Fag. Collegii Dub.) also admits, that to reconcile
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concur in the amendment. This is evidently subducting the 20 years of Samson, which I restore by supposing them, as the text necessitates, contemporary and parallel—the one exercising jurisdiction in Shiloh, in the tribe of Judah, the other avenging Israel in the camp of Dan, as we have shewn that Dan resisted the invaders. But there is an objection usually urged against this hypothesis, that must not be forgotten or unanswered. It is, that many suppose an interregnum after the taking of the ark, which they assign according to their different principles—Josephus, 20 years, some more, or less; whereas, my system obliges me to place the jurisdiction of Samuel as immediately succeeding that of Eli. The answer is obvious, and I hope will be satisfactory.

1st. Josephus is obliged to conclude this, from a supposition originally false—that Samuel was but 12 years of age at

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the 20 years, which Eusebius declares the Greek versions of his time allot to the jurisdiction of Eli, (and with which the Sixtine edition of the Septuagint agrees) to the forty of the Hebrew copies, it is necessary to suppose, that the years of Samson, are included in the latter; but it is particularly worthy of remark, that the copies of the Septuagint, to the time of Nicephorus, appear generally to have retained the reading noticed by Eusebius, which we now find only in the Sixtine edition, and in the Polyglott of London. To what are we to attribute the modern variation? The discussion of this might lead to some interesting results. The passage in the Sixtine edition is express, and the error, if any, could not have arisen from the casual mistake of a transcriber copying one character for another resembling it, as the years are written at length. 1 Saml. 4. 8. “ἐκείνη τον Ισραηλ εἰκοσιν ἔτη.” The note of Nabilus is important, “Ita vetusti codices; & sic Eusebius in Chronicis affirmat scripsisse 70 & ita Lucifer Sed in *Impressis Græcis* τεσσαράκοντα quadraginta quemadmodum etiam in Vulgata.” (Vide edition of Paris, 1628, with Vulgate Translation item Romæ Zanetti, 1587, only Greek.)

the death of Eli and when he began to prophesy, which age is doubtless too young to commence the civil jurisdiction of a people, but it is false; for Scripture (Saml. c. 3. v. 15.) informs us "he opened the doors of the house of the Lord," which was not an office for that age, as the law of Moses commanded the Levites to officiate at the age of 30, (the Septuagint says 25, which agrees better with another text, Numb. 8. 24. c. 4. v. 3.) David also numbered the Levites from the age of 30, (Chron. c. 26. v. 35.) and afterwards, as the Levites were no more to carry the tabernacle, he numbered them from 20 years, (v. 20.) so that Samuel was at least 20 or 25, when he first began to open the doors of the temple. But the text afterwards relates, (v. 19. and sequel), "that Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him, and let none of his words fall to the ground," and "all Israel from Dan to Beersheba, knew that Samuel was established to be a Prophet of the Lord," and (c. 4. v. 1.) "the word of Samuel came unto all Israel," (c. 7. v. 15.) "Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life," which texts prove not only that he was of an age to undertake the government of the people, but that, even during the life of Eli, his prophetic character and acquirements were universally acknowledged. Who, then so authorized to succeed him? But the very authority of Josephus is destructive of the principles on which he proceeds. He assigns to the jurisdiction of Samuel alone, before the election or association of Saul in the government, twelve years,

years, (Ant. 6. sub, fin.) this period, with the twenty years of the interregnum, and the twelve years of his age, at its commencement, amount to forty-four years, an age evidently too young to answer the expressions and narration of the text, (Saml. 8. v. 1.) which describes Samuel, in his old age, constituting his sons Judges over Israel, and the elders (v. 5.) address him: "Behold thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways." (Vide also 1 Saml. xii. 2.) This obvious objection overthrows the authority of Josephus, in the age which he assigns to Samuel, and in this he is without scruple rejected by his usual followers, while they tenaciously adhere to his principle of an interregnum, during twenty years, which, it must be admitted, is not very consistent or defensible. It is true that Samuel is called "a child,"* (Saml. 3. v. 1.); but this was before the spirit of prophecy was granted to him, before "all Israel knew that Samuel was established to be a Prophet of the Lord," (Saml. 3. 20.); and besides, it is usual and familiar in Scripture, to apply that term to persons who are otherwise rather advanced in years. Thus, Solomon is called a child, when king of Israel, (1 Kings, 3. v. 7.) and

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Abijah

* The expression may, in this view of it, be synonymous with that of Jonah, "120,000 who know not their right hand from their left," which is generally understood and interpreted, (although it is certainly subject to considerable difficulty) as denoting a spiritual, rather than a physical ignorance, as Samuel's might naturally be in "the days when the word of the Lord was precious;" "for there was no open vision," (1 Saml. 3. v. 1.) but after his vision, "Samuel *grew* and the Lord was with him," he is no longer classed among the young.

Abijah attributes the conduct of Rehoboam, in rejecting the complaints of the ten tribes, to his youth, (11 Chron. xiii. 7.); yet he was then above forty years of age, (11 Chron. xii. 13.)

2d. If this opinion is not received, it will be evident, that the duration of the Philistine oppression continued longer than the period assigned to it in the text; for, as we have already accounted for 36 or 38 years of it, if there succeeded an anarchy of 20 years after the death of Eli, it must follow, that these also are to be allotted to the dominion of the Philistines, as, according to the opinion of many of those who uphold this interregnum, it was a necessary consequence of the victory of the Philistines; and it is perfectly absurd to suppose that they did not take advantage of their victory and of the anarchy ensuing, to establish and consolidate their power. Therefore, this supposition extends the period of servitude beyond the limits in the text, and, of course, cannot be admitted.

3d. Scripture affords no authority for the supposition, and the text, (v. 7. 2.) which has been produced as sanctioning it, only states, that "the ark remained in Kirjathjearim 20 years," and it certainly required the microscopic discrimination of Josephus and his followers, to find, in that text, an authority for so long an anarchy, "*non nobis licet esse tam disertis.*"

After perusing the remarks we have offered on the last period, the learned reader may well enquire, on what grounds Marsham has assigned the twentieth year of the Philistine oppression

oppression as the period of the death of Samson and the taking of the ark, when Scripture, in terms almost express, informs us (Jud. c. 13.) that he was prophesied of and born *after* the commencement of the Philistine oppression; and reason will not permit us to suppose him to begin his mission until his sixteenth or eighteenth year, so that, as he judged Israel 20 years, his death coincides with the thirty-sixth or thirty-eighth year of the tyranny of the Philistines. Could Marsham have supposed that the 20 years of his authority commenced with his birth? But also, the arguments urged by Manoah's wife in favour of her opinion, that the Angel could not mean to destroy them, seem directly to declare, that he was born under the Philistine oppression: "If the Angel intended to destroy us, he would not, *as at this time* have told us such things as these," (chap. xiii. v. 23.) He would not, in the hour of our distress and misfortune, have promised us a deliverer, as I would paraphrase it.

However, as this period of the history of the Judges is, perhaps, the most perplexed, uncertain, and obscure, and as the generality of the ancient chronologists have concurred in placing an interregnum between the jurisdictions of Eli and Samson, and also between those of Eli and Samuel, it is of importance to examine the authorities and arguments by which their opinions have been supported and upheld. I shall principally consider those of Vignoles, the most able and enlightened of them all, who, after Josephus, his usual guide, has

has determined that an anarchy of 20 years intervened between the death of Eli and the commencement of the jurisdiction of Samuel at Mizpeh, (Saml. 7. v. 6.) “The Book of Judges makes no mention of Eli, and that of Samuel is equally silent as to the jurisdiction of Samson; it should appear, therefore, that there was some deficiency or interregnum in the chronology and history of this period.” (Vignoles, p. 72. Ed. Berlin, 1738.) As Severus Sulpicius, had long since observed, “Sed mihi annorum ordinem & seriem temporum persequenti parum continuatæ videntur historiæ—sed quam quot anni inter Heli & Samson minime Scriptura prodiderit video medii quiddam fuisse temporis quod laboret ambiguo.—(Hist. Eccl. Lib. 1. cap. 29.) Yet it is a remarkable and singular inconsistency, that Vignoles, after these observations, rejects their authority and makes Eli succeed Samson immediately, in the very year of his death. However, as he will not admit the years of Samson and Eli to be contemporaneous, he presents the following as his opinion and his argument in favour of his hypothesis: The slaughter of the Philistines by Samson, at his death, (Jud. 17. 30.) obliged the oppressors to resign their usurped dominion, and leave the country in repose; perhaps, the Israelites, profiting by the disorder incident to this signal destruction, took up arms, and emancipated themselves, and probably subjected their enemies, under the conduct of Eli, who was then 58 years of age, but after his dominion of forty years, the Philistines
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took advantage of his infirmities, and again had recourse to hostilities, either to subjugate the Israelites, or to shake off the yoke of their dominion. (Soit pour Sècouër le joug des Israelites ou pour les subjuguer de nouveau.) The event of this war was the taking of the ark, the death of Eli, and the commencement of the twenty years of interregnum and subjection, which was concluded by the government of Samuel. (Vignoles. 79.) It would appear on the first inspection, that this statement perfectly answers and explains all the various conditions of legitimate interpretation: but, compared with the strict letter of authority, examined with the light of Scripture, its defects will be quickly exposed and made evident.

1st. It is, indeed, undeniable, that the Book of Judges makes no mention of Eli, and that the Book of Samuel is equally silent on the character, exploits, or jurisdiction of Samson. But this will give us no argument or authority for supposing an interregnum between them, any more than the silence of either of the last Books of Kings or Chronicles with regard to names or events recorded in the preceding, should afford us grounds to suppose, that there was an hiatus in the history. The Book of Judges does not speak of Eli, because his *separate* jurisdiction did not commence until after the death of Samson, because a new and unprecedented authority was now established, viz. that of the priesthood; and because the Book of Judges was principally intended as a record of the chiefs who had avenged Israel of their enemies,
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and had led the people out to war. During the continuance of the first repose, and *after* the death of the Judges who had delivered Israel, (it is natural to suppose, that the high priest, as we have demonstrated that "*repose*," and "*jurisdiction*," are by no means commutative or co-extensive,) was the usual and last resort in cases of civil jurisdiction, as the oracle of the law. We may therefore imagine, that as during the successive jurisdictions after the time of Jephthah, Israel was gradually falling off from the worship of the true God, the Philistines invaded them, to punish this defection and apostacy, and subjected them to tribute, in the year of Abdon's death; the high priest, upon this as usual, assumed the jurisdiction and held it till his death, and the commencement of his administration is, of course, not mentioned any more than in the occurrence of similar and preceding instances. But others supposing that, after Samson commenced his mission, the power more properly belonged to the leader of the armies, allow Eli but twenty years, viz. those preceding the commencement of Samson, and so his death, and that of Eli, were nearly cotemporary. The Book of Samuel reciprocally makes no mention of Samson, because, in its commencement, it is merely a family memoir. It opens with the jurisdiction of Eli, it affords merely a detail of occurrences in Shiloh, where the ark and the civil magistracy were seated—and the notice of the pilgrimage to Shiloh surely was by no means connected with the mention of the exploits or
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the judicature of Samson. Samuel, when giving a catalogue of the chosen deliverers of Israel, (Saml. xii. v. 11.) does not, even when his subject would seem to lead him to it, mention Samson, his achievements or his jurisdiction. Are we to conclude from this, that he was not acquainted with his existence? Yet the argument would be as just as that produced by Vignoles for supposing an interregnum. However, as Vignoles has given up the point in *this* case, and as we shall see in the sequel, that it is as clearly contradicted in this period of Scripture, as in any other where anarchies have been arbitrarily inserted, we shall proceed to consider his remaining arguments for making Eli and Samson *exclusively* successive.

1st. If the slaughter of the Philistine lords had emancipated Israel, according to his first supposition, then Samson *finally* delivered Israel, instead of commencing their deliverance, contrary to the express language of Scripture.

2dly. If the Israelites, under the conduct of Eli, took advantage of the death of the Philistine lords, and emancipated themselves, on what principle will he account for the silence of Scripture, that there is no allusion however slight, no mention however casual, of an event so flattering to the national pride, so unlooked for by its vanity? depressed and humiliated as both must have been by the consciousness of a subjugation of almost half a century, the longest and most severe they ever had experienced. May we not here retort

the arguments of Vignoles from the silence of history, against himself? Why is not the usual language and expression, the "land had rest forty years," employed on this occasion? Or if, as he supposes, the Israelites probably subjected the Philistines, (*les assujettir a leur tour,*) as is most natural and consistent, on the hypothesis that their victory was so complete as to insure a peace of forty years, still more I would reiterate the question, Why is there no allusion to it in the Books of Judges or of Samuel, no facts recorded that would, at least, *insinuate* their triumph, and the subjection of their bitterest enemies? Why, on the contrary, do the Philistines, hearing that the ark of the covenant was come into the camp of Israel, (*Saml. 4. 7. 8. 9.*) encourage one another, "Be strong, oh ye Philistines, quit yourselves like men, that ye be not *slaves to the Hebrews*, as they have *been to you*." This at least it will be admitted, would not be very natural language to use, after a subjugation of forty years to those very despised Hebrews, whose oppression they are represented as attempting to shake off. Men are generally most affected with the later and more immediate crises of their fortune, are disposed to remember late experience, rather than ancient tradition, to consider the *last forty years* of slavery, rather than the *preceding* of dominion; and historians are at least as willing to record the flourishing periods of their country's prosperity and triumph, as the disastrous interval of its subjugation and decline. To what principle in the human mind, then,

then, shall we refer the conduct of the Philistines, who seem spontaneously to forget and overlook their late and lengthened subjection, while they remember, without effort, their former and remote triumph? And, on what principle equally irreconcilable and anomalous, have the historians of Israel so carefully recorded the oppressive domination of the Philistines during forty years, (Jud. 1. 3. 1.) and so completely forgotten *their* subsequent subjugation, and the triumph of their countrymen during a period equally long? Surely, they were bound to record the mercies, equally as the punishments of heaven, when writing the history of the particular providence of God. But we see, on the one hand, the Philistines expressly assert their dominion over Israel, and implicitly at least, deny their own subjection; and we see on the other, the sacred historians acknowledge the explicit justice of *their* statement, admit the subjection of their countrymen, and set up no claim to any subsequent authority over their oppressors. Are we then to admit into the history of truth, facts, statements, and periods, unauthorized, nay, contradicted by Scripture, in order to serve the purposes of system—surely not.

But we may also remark, as an observable singularity, that Samuel, when recounting to the people, the mercies and the punishments of God, notices three particular oppressions:—that of Jabin, of the Philistines, and of the king of Moab. But he records four deliverers, and among them Jephthah and himself. The oppression of the Ammonites, from which

Jephthah emancipated them, is not mentioned, yet the avenger is panegyricized! The text, recording the oppression of Ammon, informs us, they were assisted by the Philistines, (Jud. 10. v. 7.) who were doubtless their most powerful auxiliaries, and who, at least at the time Samuel was addressing the elders of Israel, were the people most formidable and dangerous to his countrymen, and consequently he would principally dwell on a deliverance from them as from the more pressing and immediate objects of their fears. If, therefore, there had been any other deliverance achieved by either Eli or Samson, surely he would have recorded it, when he has celebrated the defeat of *this* people, when acting as only auxiliaries, as if they had been principals in the war.* But, again I would demand, when the Prophet, (c. 2. 27.) was denouncing the approaching judgments of Heaven on Eli and his house, would he not have recalled the great instance of the divine favour, which had selected him as the deliverer of his people and have contrasted with powerful and pathetic eloquence, his present guilty weakness with his former fidelity and virtue? Would he not have appealed to the strongest emotions of the human heart against the vice most abhorrent to the feelings of human nature—ingratitude. Would he not, like Nathan, have addressed his judgment through his passions? called upon him
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* We may remark here also, how inconsistent this is with Marsham's principles, which determine, that the Ammonites *only*, were defeated by Jephthah, and that the Philistines continued their dominion in the West for 40 years, until the time of Samuel.

to deliver the sentence of eloquent self-accusation, on the dramatic picture of his represented criminality, and finally ratified the condemnation, by the simple and sublime verdict, "thou art the man."

3dly. But even the expressions of Scripture contradict the conclusion of this system. Instead of supposing that the Philistines rose in the last year of Eli, to emancipate themselves, or to subjugate the Israelites to their dominion again, as Vignoles alledges, it, on the contrary, represents Israel as revolting, or assembling against the Philistines. (Saml. 4. v. 1.) "Now, Israel went out against the Philistines to battle, and pitched beside Ebenezer, and the Philistines pitched in Aphek." In the whole series of the history of the Judges, Israel assembles its armies only to repel invasion, or to shake off the yoke of oppression. In the first case, there would have been *preceding* mention of the conduct of Israel, which had provoked the wrath of Heaven, and also of the *enemy* who was appointed the instrument of vengeance. The denunciations in the last chapters, delivered by a Prophet to Eli, (c. 2. 27.) and by a vision to Samuel, (c. 3. 11. and seq.) were personal to Eli and his house, but the punishment was awfully national. We must suppose, then, as the national vices are not mentioned as the *immediate* cause of the severe vengeance of Heaven, that *they* were previously subjected to punishment, or that Israel was at that very period under oppression, which must be the same as that, from which Samson had *begun* to deliver

deliver them; and that the great defeat of their armies which took place in the last year of Eli, and occasioned the loss of the ark, was the *consummation* of their punishment for presuming to attempt to shake off the Philistine oppression, without previous repentance and contrition.* We shall, from this view of the question, derive the reason of the singularity both in the *statement* of this revolt, and the *application* of it to the house of Eli. The first is without any previous account of transgression or of repentance, and the second is an instance of divine justice at once uncompromised and unimpeachable; since the punishment of national guilt happily assimilates and coincides with the ends of divine wisdom, in the manifestation of its *more particular* providence: and it naturally happens, both that Israel should attempt to take advantage of the achievements of Samson, esteeming, in the views of human policy, the opportunity favourable to effect their deliverance, and that their attempt should be punished by defeat, since it was undertaken without *previously* conciliating the favour of Heaven, by an earnest repentance, and by an humble acknowledgment

* We may here take notice of a strong argument for this interpretation, which has been hitherto completely overlooked, that when the historian records that Eli had associated his sons in the government, they are represented as remaining with him in Shiloh, (1 Saml. 2. 12. 17. 22.) and *there* exercising many acts of oppression and tyranny over the people, it is not mentioned as in the case of Samuel and his sons, that they divided the cares of government, and each attended to a particular district, (1 Saml. 8. 2.); which certainly infers that their jurisdiction was confined to the tribe of Judah, and agrees only with the time of Samson, when there was a peace between the Philistines and that tribe (Jud. xv. 10.) while they oppressed all the other tribes in their vicinity.

ledgment of the justice, which had hitherto pursued their criminality, and under which they were now experiencing all the awful punishments incident to unrepented guilt.

4th. The arguments produced against the contemporaneous years of Samson and the Philistines by Vignoles, and which seem to have been the great cause of his making the administration of Samson and Eli *exclusively* successive, have not greater force, and therefore, the conclusion founded upon them must be given up. "Is it to be supposed, is it credible, that a young man of eighteen or twenty years of age, undistinguished and unknown (d'ailleurs un simple particulier,) should be *chosen* Judge of the nation against a foreign domination consolidated now for twenty years, and this when the Israelites were only numbered from that age?" (Ex. 30. 14.) Here the whole argument consists in the ambiguous and equivocal signification of the word "*chosen*," (*choisi*,) and I would answer it by saying, that Scripture, in no one place informs us, alludes to, or even can be brought to signify, that Samson was "*chosen* Judge of Israel." He was *designed* for it by Heaven, he was prophesied by an Angel; he was deserving of it by his exploits, but we cannot say he was chosen to it by his countrymen. In effect, none of the Judges, except Jephthah, seem *properly* to have been *chosen* by the election of the tribes, and *his* authority appears to have been sufficiently limited, (*vide supra*). He was only acknowledged "*head over the inhabitants of Gilead*," and the very fact of the tribe of Judah assembling

assembling to seize and to deliver up their avenger, in the case of Samson, proves the extreme distinction between the designation of Heaven and the choice of men. The text expressly assures us, "the Philistines had dominion at that time over Israel," and *that* time was the commencement of his ministry. (Jud. 14. 4.) (xv. 9. 10.) The Philistines came up against him, and his countrymen address him, "Knowest thou not, that the Philistines are rulers over us," (v. 11.) and, (v. 20.) "He judged Israel in the days of the Philistines, twenty years." Can any thing be more express, definite, or precise? And, on what principle can Vignoles state, "the period of his jurisdiction was neither absolute servitude, as during the forty years preceding, nor absolute liberty, as under the other Judges." (p. 67.) I can see nothing in the narrative of Scripture, that bears even the marks of relative freedom, much less of the civil or internal jurisdiction of independence. He is, indeed, a great avenger of Israel, but there is not a single passage that can lead us to suppose he ever led the thousands of Israel against their enemies. Vignoles remarks, as a great singularity in his history, that the period of his jurisdiction is recorded twice in Scripture, (Jud. 15. 20. 16. 31.) I would remark another, that a greater space is granted to the account of his exploits, than to those of any other of the Judges. Surely, therefore, if any other distinguishing achievement or memorable action had occurred, if he had led the armies of his country against the enemy with triumph and
success,

success, it would not have been omitted. Indeed, we are told, he slew more at his death than during his life, (16. 30.) and the numerical accuracy of Scripture is so great, that it affords us *data* almost precise, to judge the terms of the proportion; and it will be evident to every one considering *both*, that all his exertions were personal, and his success individual and exclusive. It is, indeed, true, as Vignoles has remarked, that Samson has obtained a privilege not accorded to any other of the Judges of Israel, that of being specially prophesied by Jacob, while declaring the future fortunes of his race, (Gen. c.41. 16.) “ Dan shall judge his people as one of the tribes of Israel,” which the ancient Jews, St. Jerome, and most of the moderns agree, is *uniquely* applicable to Samson, who was of that tribe, (Jud. xiii. 2.); but I cannot see what his argument will gain by this, for placing him (contrary to the express and reiterated declaration of Scripture,) *after* the conclusion of the Philistine oppression, at the *commencement* of which, it should seem, he was born. He most assuredly did judge or avenge Israel, and he commenced their deliverance. He was as singularly distinguished by the peculiar election, and designation, of Heaven, from his birth, as by the earlier prophecy of Jacob, but he might as well commence the office of an avenger of his country at 18 or 20 years, when his exertions were to be merely personal, as at a more advanced age. David was chosen by the Almighty about the same age, and had, like Samson, received evidence of the protection of Heaven, by his destroying a lion

at an earlier period. When he is first recommended to Saúl, he is described as a “valiant man and prudent,” when he could scarcely have been more than sixteen years old. (Saml. 16.18.)

5th. The gloss and paraphrase which Vignoles attempts to give the expressions of Scripture, that Samson “should begin to deliver Israel;” and the idea he has introduced, “that the sacred historian, from the commencement of Samson, supposes a new state which does not conclude till the reign of David,” are not authorized by Scripture, “Samson is to begin to deliver Israel from the hands of the Philistines, and the deliverance is to be consummated by David, the new state is the alternation of hostility and peace between the two people, the Philistines and the house of Israel.” (p. 68.) I can in no place discover any indication of the sacred historian, introducing us to this new state, or supposing it himself. It is plain indeed, that the Philistines appear *now* upon the scene as principals, when they had *before* invaded Israel only as predatory or auxiliary hosts, in the time of Shamgar and of Jair. All the other surrounding nations, had been, at different times *since*, extirpated or subdued; while the increasing commerce of Phœnicia, and the peculiar advantages of situation they enjoyed, had contributed to strengthen and to consolidate their power, and their resistance was consequently more obstinate, as their resources became continually more efficient, productive, and inexhaustible. Hence, the duration of the hostilities between the two states, before
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the final contest; but this is merely a continuance of the ancient state of the Jewish republic, and not by any means an introduction of a new one. The same mean of interpretation might be extended to David's conquest of Moab and Edom, and we might, on this principle, state, that Ehud only *commenced* the deliverance of Israel, which was *finally* consummated by David. The text, indeed, (2 Saml. v. 8.) which Vignoles produces, does state, that David was designed to be the deliverer of Israel from the Philistines, but we are to recollect, this is spoken by Abner, during the division of the kingdom between Ishbosheth and David, and *after* the great defeat in Gilboa, in which Saul was slain. We are to suppose this defeat was productive of signal consequences, and that the kingdom of Israel must have suffered in loss of territory or in subjection to tribute. This is the oppression from which Abner expects and predicts David will emancipate them. The reunion of the kingdom under one head; an accomplished warrior, and the chosen anointed of Heaven; appears to be the best means of securing this desirable object; and the crafty politician, meditating treachery against his sovereign, urges such arguments as will be most likely to influence the pride, the patriotism, or the religious feelings of his countrymen. (2 Saml. 3. 18.) Agreeably to this, we find that Samuel, in his last solemn address to the people assembled to renew the kingdom, on the defeat of the Ammonites, (S. xii.) after recounting the several instances of rebellion and idolatry of which they

had been guilty, and the dreadful punishments and oppressions they had justly incurred, proceeds to commemorate the deliverers whom God had raised up on their repentance, and mentions himself as one, "who delivered them out of the hand of their enemies, on every side, and ye dwelled safe." If we look back to the history of the jurisdiction of Samuel, we shall find a full and decisive paraphrase on this modest and equitable panegyric, (7. 13.) "So the Philistines were subdued, and they came no more into the coast of Israel, and the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines, *all the days of Samuel*. And the cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel from Ekron even unto Gath; and the coasts thereof, did Israel deliver out of the hands of the Philistines. And there was peace between Israel and the Amorites," In this, we have every possible character of a deliverer and a Judge, distinctly enumerated, and we must equally acknowledge the title of Samuel to that honourable distinction, with that of David; for the deliverance atchieved by David is circumstantially detailed almost in the identical terms here used. (2S. 8. 1. Chron. 18. 1.) I trust the arguments Vignoles has urged for placing the jurisdiction of Samson after the domination of the Philistines, will not now be insisted on. Besides, the very same course of argument would prove, that Saul was to *consummate* the deliverance of Israel, *commenced* by Samson, for (Saml. 9. 16.) the Lord addresses Samuel, "I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin,
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and thou, shalt anoint him, to be captain over my people, Israel, that he may save my people, out of *the hand of the Philistines*, for I have looked upon my people, because their cry is come up to me." This, evidently alludes to the subsequent deliverance of that part of the tribes which were still subjected to them, and whom Samuel had not been permitted to deliver from their perseverance in idolatry and guilt. (chap. 10. 5. c. 13. 3. 14. 1.)

6th. But the reasoning of chronologists, in favour of the interregnum of twenty years between the death of Eli, and the commencement of the jurisdiction of Samuel, will be found equally inconclusive, and unsupported by the authority of Scripture. There is, indeed, a single text to which we have before alluded, that speaks of the ark of the covenant after its return, remaining "for 20 years in Kirjathjearim," (chap. 7. 2.); and this is the *single* ground of argument for the insertion of this anarchy or interregnum: because, say its advocates, it is placed "historically *before* the jurisdiction of Samuel." (Vignoles, 82.) And the historical precedence attributed to the supposed interregnum is merely because that it *literally* antecedes, since the commencement of the administration of Samuel is related only in the next verse. Such are the arguments arising from a spirit of system! I have had occasion before to remark on the evidence and force of these verbal, grammatical, and positional reasonings, derived from the particular place or situation of a verse, including an epoch or an interval, and I shall now produce a very remarkable instance

instance of the anticipating spirit of the sacred historians, or of that adherence to the unity of narration, that induced them sometimes to postpone the mention of an event prior in point of period to the one they are relating, when the introduction of it would interrupt the course, or affect the completeness, of the narration. In the eighth chapter of Samuel, the elders of Israel are represented as demanding a king from Samuel, and complaining of the government of his sons—"Behold, now thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways, now make us a king to *judge* us like all the nations." (v. 5. & seq.) The two next chapters are taken up with the proceeding upon their request, and the consequent election of a sovereign. It appears, however, that, as is usual in elections, many of the people were dissatisfied, and asked, in captious disquietude, "How shall this man save us." (10. 27.) From what evil? we might reasonably demand: for, until this, there is no mention of danger or oppression, nor is it alluded to in the request of the elders. In the next chapter, the historian fully informs us, both of the danger and of its cause. It was the threatened invasion of Nahash, king of Ammon, that induced the people to desire a king to judge and to lead them; and Samuel himself, fully demonstrates this, in his last address, to which I have formerly referred: (chap. 12. 12.) "And when ye saw that Nahash, the king of the children of Ammon, came against you, (or "was coming,") ye said unto me, Nay: but a king shall reign over us; when the Lord your God was your king." From this it will, I trust, be evident
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and acknowledged that *positional* precedence does not *always* infer historic or chronological priority, and consequently cannot be alledged, without subsidial and extraneous argument, for the insertion of this interregnum. If we examine the current of sacred history, as we have done in the case of this supposed interregnum, we shall find it is by no means acknowledged or insinuated. In effect, there is but *one* oppression of the Philistines recorded, until the period under review, viz. that from which Samson “began to deliver Israel.” (Jud. xiii. and sequel.) If the jurisdiction of Eli and the taking of the ark, commenced *another*, it is a remarkable deviation from the usual style and expression of the sacred history, that its duration or commencement are not any where recorded, and that the sojourn of the ark should be understood as synonymous with the continuance of the oppression. It would be remarkable that the wonderful and providential return of the ark should produce no adequate effect upon the religious feelings of the Israelites, that for twenty years after this miraculous intervention in their favour, they should have persevered in idolatry and disobedience, and afterwards assemble, “lament after the Lord,” (v. 2. sub. finem,) repent, on the preaching of Samuel, and “put away Baalim and Astaroth, and serve the Lord only;” when twenty years had elapsed; when the memory of the Philistine misfortunes, in consequence of the capture of the ark, misfortunes explicitly ascribed, by *the enemy* themselves, to the power and influence
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of the God of Israel, (Saml. v. passim, part. c. 11. 12. chap. 6. v. 5. 6.) must have almost died away; when the signal defeat of their armies, defeat, which *usually* brought them to a sense of duty and an acknowledgement of guilt, was but partially remembered or completely forgotten; when servitude was lightened by habit, and external dominion assimilated by time to legitimate authority; when the example, the precepts, and the personal influence of Samuel, unquestionably would have been sedulously exerted to recal them to piety and virtue; an influence, doubtless powerfully assisted at this juncture by the renewed manifestation of the particular providence of God, evinced in the miraculous return of the ark; in the punishment of the Philistines and the men of Bethshemesh, and more particularly by the experience of his singularly prophetic gifts; so awfully proclaimed even in the late destruction of their hosts; in the death of their leaders, the sons of Eli; and in the loss of the peculiar religious symbol of their nation; according to his prediction. What! are we to suppose, that his authority, and his preaching, acquired new influence on the minds of his countrymen, in proportion as the evidence for the divinity of his mission, for the religious importance, the heavenly selection of his character, became remote, indistinct, or traditional? The effect of "line upon line, and precept upon precept," recommended by inspiration, is doubtless great and operative; but precept, practice, the language of prophecy, or the recommendations of virtue, are more powerfully

fully decisive, more authoritatively impressive, influential, and commanding, upon the human heart, when it is humiliated by misfortune; affected by an awful sense of divine displeasure; elevated by the conviction of the revealed majesty of a present God; and the acknowledged sanctity of its ritual and belief, upheld by the testimony, equally unbought and unimpeachable, forced *even* from their enemies; pressed by a sense of the immediate miracle; and, at length satisfied of the selection and the inspiration of its leader. To them, prophecy had become reality, misfortune its consummation, and miracles its test. This accumulated and more immediate pressure of every motive to piety and practice, which could influence the mind, surely, would not be neglected, or overlooked, for twenty years; when zeal might become languid, and inducements indecisive. And it must have been the influence of these obvious considerations, which obliged Josephus to suppose, that, “during the twenty years the ark remained at Kirjathjearim, the Israelites lived *very religiously*, and offered, with the greatest fervour, sacrifices and vows to the Lord, so that the prophet Samuel believed the time was at length arrived, in which he might with propriety stimulate and exhort them to the recovery of their liberties.” (Ant. lib. 6. p. 171.) Determined to derive, an anarchy, and oppression, of twenty years, he was only consistent with analogy and reason, in supposing, that after all the various encouragements to fidelity and obedience they had received, the period was passed in the manner he describes; the language of Scripture, however,

which does not desire to support a system, but, to record a fact, is very different: (Saml. 7. 3.) “ And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, ‘ if ye do return unto the Lord with all your hearts, *then* put away the strange Gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only, and he will deliver you out of the hands of the Philistines. Then the children of Israel did put away Baalim and Ashtaroth, and served the Lord only.” Was it necessary, after twenty years of virtue to speak thus? Or, are we to suppose, that after so many late and awful evidences of the sin of disobedience, and of the presence and providence of the Deity; from experienced misfortune from consummated prophecy; from previous denunciation; and from miraculous interference; so long a period would have been passed in the practices of vice, in a perseverance *in idolatry* and in the commission of those sins which had subjected them to the wrath and visitation of Heaven? Surely, we must suppose, that, the growth of those evils, and the practice of those idolatries, is to be referred to the period of the jurisdiction of Eli, corresponding, and contemporaneous to, the oppression of the Philistines; (Jud. xiii. 1.) an age and period sufficiently determined to have been fruitful in iniquity; to have been so far disobedient and rebellious, as to be abandoned by the long suffering justice of Heaven to its own evils; (Saml. iii. 1.) for we read, “ the word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision.” And it
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was not until after the choice of Samuel as a prophet, that (Saml. iii. 21.) "the Lord appeared again in Shiloh." The Scriptures expressly declare, that "Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life;" (Saml. 7. 15.) and, that "all Israel, from Dan even to Beersheba, knew Samuel was established to be a prophet to the Lord," even before the death of Eli. (Saml. 4. 20.) This is repeated again, in terms yet more precise, "And the word of Samuel came to all Israel," before the destruction of the host and the loss of the ark. (Saml. 4. 1.); unless we chuse to adopt the marginal reading, "came to pass," to all Israel, and then it will refer to the consummation of his prophecy against the house of Eli, which the historian is proceeding to relate. And Samuel himself, in his address to the people, at the renewal of the kingdom, in which he resigns all authority to Saul, declares to them, "I have walked before you from *my childhood, even* to this day," (xii. 2.); which evidently refers to the continuance of his power from a very early age, or from the death of Eli; as he had said before, "behold the king *walketh before you*," (xii. 2.) is your chief, leader, and ruler, as I have been. How can these texts, so express, unequivocal, and determinate, become compatible or consistent with an anarchy, or interregnum of twenty years? They confer and receive reciprocal illustration and evidence: and, if Vignoles remarks, as singular authority for his reasoning in the case of Samson, "that his jurisdiction is twice mentioned in Scripture," I may, in this,

borrow and retort his argument, and defence, against the principle, I combat—*fas est et ab hoste doceri*.

7th. But I may be asked, what then shall we understand by the contested verse, (Saml. 7. 2.) to which Codoman has so long since, (above 220 years), directed the attention of chronologists. “ *Hic lectorem obiter abhortor ut diligenter consideret cur mansionis 20 annorum arca Dei in Kirjathjearim mentio fiat.* (Cod. Chron.) I have already given my reasons why it does not appear to me to be made synonymous with the Philistine oppression, or Israel’s idolatry; and having determined that, it bears little on my subject, or supputation, to enquire, or to speculate.—But I may offer a supposition.

The ark had remained unremoved at Shiloh since the time of the conquest. (Saml. 4. 7.). The place, the name, and the antiquity of this residence had almost rendered it consecrated as the seat of religious worship; Shiloh was only a day’s journey from the scene of the action, in which the ark was taken, (Saml. 14. 12.) and was most probably abandoned to the enemy; at least we find that Samuel, who had remained at Shiloh during the life of Eli, removed to Ramah, which continued to be his residence during his jurisdiction and till the period of his death, (7. 17. 15. 1.); a removal only to be accounted for on the supposition of the approach of the Philistines, in consequence of their victory. The Israelites *lamented* (S. 7. 2.) then, the loss of the holy city, the consecrated seat of religion, and of its symbols. This city was
probably

probably not re-taken until the victories of Saul had humiliated the enemy; at least, it is not, most certainly among those recovered by Samuel, which lay between "Ekron and Gath," (Saml. 14.); while it is exactly adjoining, (a little to the North-west) of Michmash, where the Philistines assembled and were defeated by Saul. (Saml. 13. v. 2. 5. 11. & c. 14. 31.) And it is remarkable that it is mentioned, (14. 21.) that the Philistines were at that time attended by the Israelites of "the country round about the camp," which evidently includes Shiloh. We are to suppose then, that as the defeat was most complete, and, "they smote the Philistines that day from Michmash to Ajalon," (v. 31.) Shiloh was recovered and perhaps the ark removed there, "for the ark of God was at that time with the children of Israel," (v. 18.)—a most forcible evidence for our supposition, particularly if we consider the chronologic characters of it, for this was when "Saul had reigned two years over Israel." (xiii. 1.) Now, granting 16 or 18 years to Samuel alone, as the most distinguished chronologists agree, this was perhaps precisely in the twenty-first year after the taking of the ark, and probably, as it "remained seven months in the country of the Philistines," (6. 1.) it continued, as the disputed text assigns, *exactly* twenty years in the city of Kirjathjearim, and after the death of Saul and the destruction of his host in Mount Gilboa, we may suppose, that the experience of its security made the Israelites, remove it to Kirjathjearim, again, as Shiloh, was too much in the vicinity

cinity of the enemy; from whence it was brought by David, to be finally placed in Jerusalem.

There is one text that might seem to militate with this construction, (c. 14. 3.) in which it is said, that among those with Saul at Gibeah, when he was pursued by the Philistines, previous to his victory, was "Ahiah, the son of Ahitub, Ichabod's brother, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eli, the Lord's priest in Shiloh, wearing an ephod." Since it might be said that, as Ichabod was born at the *commencement* of the jurisdiction of Samuel, his brother Ahitub, could scarcely have had a son at *this* period of an age to minister in the priest's office; but we are to remember that Eli did not commence his jurisdiction until he was 58 years of age, and of course his son, Phinehas, the father of Ahitub and Ichabod, might soon afterwards have attained man's estate and married; and as Eli held the office of high priest and died in the government in his ninety-eighth year, it is by no means improbable that the *eldest* son of Phinehas was *then* the father of Ahiah, who consequently could, at the period we are considering, have attained the requisite age to undertake the duties of the Levites; the early marriages usual in the east, and the privileges of polygamy, render such inequalities in the comparative births of the same family by no means unusual or unprecedented. The histories of the Asiatic sovereigns, were it necessary, would present innumerable instances to parallel and confirm this; and, in the family of David himself,

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we are almost *certain*, that *it was* realized; he was not perhaps born, when some of his brothers had already attained the military and capitation age required by custom, or by the Mosaic code. It should seem, indeed, that we are not pressing the subject too far in assuming this text to be auxiliary to our interpretation, and that the mention of Elias "the Lord's priest in Shiloh," is a particular record, that he was the last who there exercised the office or the jurisdiction annexed to it. I do not, however, press the conclusion, that after the victory of Saul, the ark was removed to Shiloh again, perhaps it might have been only placed at Nob, where the priests were dwelling at the time of the inhuman massacre of them by the command of Saul, and from which the son of Ahiah (or Ahimelech, see margin,) escaped to David. The consecration of the sword of Goliath, which was preserved "behind the ephod," (c. 9. 21. 9.) in this city, seems indeed, to afford strong evidence of this, especially since Ahiah, or Ahimelech, was high priest, and, as such, is summoned before Saul, (v. 22. 12.) and accused of "consulting the Lord for David," (v. 10.) in the same city. But from this, it may have been removed again to Kirjathjearim, after the death of the priests, or on the invasion of the Philistines. However, I repeat, that the chronology we support is completely independent of this conjecture.

The next period affords no obstacle or requires no parade of argument: it is universally agreed, that Samuel and Saul
reigned

reigned 40 years, or that the jurisdiction of Samuel is to be included in the 40 years assigned to Saul. In fact, the disputed text, (S. 13. 1.) on which so much learning has been exhausted, and so much fruitless ingenuity thrown away, can in no other manner be explained consistently with the analogy of language, and the natural sense and meaning of Scripture.

Our English translation is pronounced by many learned men inconsistent with the genius of the original; so that it is at most, but an ingenious supposition to explain a difficult passage. The Vulgate has, "*Filius unius anni erat Saul quando regnare cœpisset, duobus autem annis regnavit super Israel.*" Arius Montanus translates it, as he says, word for word, thus: "*Filius anni Saul quando regnavit, in regnando ipsum & duobus annis regnavit super Israel,*" which, I confess, I do not rightly understand. The investigation of this text would of itself require a long dissertation. I shall, therefore, merely refer the reader to the several treatises on this subject, apud Poli, synopsis, Usher, the Vossii, Vignoles, &c. only adding, that after the most enlarged examination of the subject; and consulting as many original authorities, as my opportunities would permit, I think the interpretation most unexceptionable is, that "Saul was forty years old when he began to reign, and reigned 22 years over Israel," agreeable to Josephus, who grants him but 20 or 22 years. The remaining eighteen are to be attributed to Samuel alone.

The last article affords a mean of explanation, why the sacred history does not assign any precise period to Samuel,
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only saying "he judged Israel all the days of his life;" his years are to be included in those of Saul.

It is, indeed, true, that Josephus gives to Saul and Samuel eighteen years in conjunction, and after his death, twenty-two years to Saul alone—a supputation which has been adopted by many, and more particularly by Vignoles, whose usual accuracy, discrimination, and research, seems, on this occasion, to have deserted him. His scrupulous adherence to the authority of Josephus, has induced him to overlook the series of facts related in the sacred history, an attention to which would have perfectly convinced him of the infidelity of his guide. After the conquest of Amalek, and the death of their king, (Saml. 14. 33.) we are told, Samuel "came no more to see Saul until the day of his death," (v. 35.); and the next chapter gives an account of the choice of David to succeed Saul, and of the ceremony of anointing him by Samuel. David, at this period, must have been at least 18 years of age, since he was immediately sent for to attend on Saul, and is described (v. 18.) as "a valiant man, a man of war, and *prudent in business*," a character evidently not consistent with an earlier age, perhaps scarcely with that which we have assigned to him. He became, on arriving at the court of the sovereign, his "armour bearer," which certainly was an office of considerable responsibility and importance. The series of the history proceeds to relate the next war against the Philistines in which David slew their champion, and which

must have taken place some few years after, as Saul did not *then* recognize David, (c. 17. 54. 55.) who had returned to his father, after the king had recovered from his melancholy, and was (chap. 17. 15. & seq.) now acquiring a port and appearance more masculine and imposing, which had altered his youthful aspect and physiognomy; his strength had been developed by his age, and his stature was become most elevated and commanding, as the armour of Saul whose advantageous height is particularly commended, was put on him for the action. (v. 38.) The succeeding chapters circumstantially relate the history of David and the conduct pursued towards him by Saul. (18. 5.) He was made captain of the host of Israel; obtained the daughter of Saul in marriage, (v. 27.); became the object of his jealousy, and *escaped to Samuel*, to Ramah, (chap. 19. 18. 22.) after this to Gath, (chap. 21. 10.) thence to the cave of Adullam, where he assembled a body of malcontents, who followed his fortunes until he was elevated to the throne. The various persecutions he suffered from the jealousy of Saul are recorded, until, in the cave of Engedi, he spared the life of his sovereign; an agreement was, in consequence, made between Saul and David, after which Saul returned to his usual residence, and David remained in his strong hold. “And Samuel, (the next chapter commences,) died, and all the Israelites were gathered together and lamented him, and buried him in his house at Ramah. And David arose, and
went

went down to the wilderness of Paran," (c. 25. 1.) which must have been from Engedi, his last resort, and evidently after the death of Samuel. The wilderness of Paran is not far from Carmel, where he soon removed and married Abigail, the widow of Nabal, and immediately after this, he was pursued by Saul, and again saved the king's life from the attempt of Abishai, who accompanied him into the camp. (26. 9.) He fled from thence to Gath a second time, (27. 1.) " And the time that David dwelt in the country of the Philistines was a full year and four months," (27. 7.) which was until the great invasion of Israel by the Philistines, in which David accompanied his benefactor, the king of Gath, (29. 2.) and in the course of which Saul and his sons were slain, and the armies of Israel completely defeated in Mount Gilboa. (c. 31.) David succeeded to the throne of Judah immediately after, being aged 30 years, as we are informed in many texts of Scripture. (2 Sam. c. 5. v. 4.) It is therefore impossible, that there could have intervened more than twelve years from the time he was anointed by Samuel, and was sent for by Saul, which was immediately after, till the recognition of his title to the crown ; as many learned commentators suppose, that the cause of Saul's melancholy was the departure of the spirit of God from him, which we are told, settled on David from *the moment* he was anointed by the Prophet, (Saml. 16. 13.) and perhaps, indeed, the interval was not more than five or six years. Vossius and Pezron would read two years in place

of the twenty-two of Josephus, from the death of Samuel, and the present copies of Clemens Alexandrinus, who professes to have followed the system of Josephus with great accuracy, concur in the amendment. (Vide Clemens Edit Sylburgii Lug. Bat. p. 238.) But both may be reconciled by supposing they reigned in conjunction but a very few years, and that the forty years assigned by Saint Paul include the period from the commencement of Samuel till the end of Saul.

Thus, then, stands my calculus:—The building of the temple commenced in the second month of the fourth year of Solomon, (1 Kings, 6. 1. compared with 2. Chron. 3. 2.), so that there are three years in retrospect to the end of David. David reigned 40 years; Saul and Samuel 40; Eli and Samson 40; Abdon, Elon, and Ibsan, 25; Jephthah, Jair, Tolah, and Abimelech, 54; Gideon 40; 40 years in retrospect to the defeat of Sisera; 80, to the conquest of Moab, after the death of Eglon; 40, from thence to the defeat of Chusan; 8, to the beginning of his domination, which affords an aggregate of 410 years; 70 are necessary to complete the calculus, of which we have 30 to the passage of the Jordan, and 40 from thence to the exod.

The several items have been already sufficiently discussed, and the authority for each supported, I trust, with the requisite evidence, to the satisfaction of the candid: the advantages it possesses over the several theories already proposed, to
solve

solve the acknowledged difficulties of the text, have been briefly indicated, and it only remains for us to clear ourselves from the charge of inconsistency which might be plausibly urged against our admitting the servitude under Chusan to be calculated exclusively, which we do not permit in any other instance. It is because the historian evidently records it to have followed the government of the elders, and from the conclusion of this servitude commenced the peculiar expression, “the land had rest forty years,” viz. to the defeat of Eglon. But there is another reason still more valid, viz. that of allotting 25 years to Joshua and the elders from the conquest, as has been usually the principle and opinion of the earlier fathers of the church, in whose time many records still existed, to influence and direct them; and computing all the years of the reposes and Judges together, as we find them recorded in the text with the 84 years of the kings, the aggregate, including the period in the wilderness, is 472 years, 8 less than the period designated in the text, (1 Kings, 6. 1.) which clearly refers to this first oppression, succeeding the authority of the elders.

In a word, by this manner of arranging the supputation of the times, we collect the just calculus required by the text; and independent of the several advantages, already detailed, which it possesses over the systems of those whose principles would lead them to extend the interval; it avoids the inconsistencies which have been remarked in the hypotheses of
 Marsham

Marsham and Usher, and it elucidates their cause. It traces through all the involutions of sophistical ingenuity, their various and evident errors, misconceptions, and obscurities, which supported by no authority but conjecture, and a continued *petitio principii*; and resting on no grounds but their ingenious misinterpretation of many texts, to adhere (“quasi obtorto collo,” says Perizonius) to one; first brought the reading (1 Kings, 6. 1.) into neglect, and finally originated the many inconsistent systems, answering equally to every hypothesis that were founded on its ruins. It agrees, without forcing, with the sacred text, in finding nearly three hundred years from the conquest of the Amorites to the age of Jephthah. It grants to Joshua a duration of legislative jurisdiction conformable to the sense and expression of Scripture and the fathers. It allots to the government of the elders and to the fidelity of the Israelites, in the worship of the true and only God, a period which answers the conditions of the interpretation and sense of Scripture, (Jud. 2. 7. & 10. Jos. 24.) where it is said, “Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua and the elders that over-lived Joshua,” to which (Jud. 2. 10.) it is added, to give a more precise idea of the duration, “all *that* generation were gathered unto their fathers,” &c. The Vulgate reads, in the first verse quoted, “et seniorum qui longe vixerunt tempore post Joshue.” &c. By “*that* generation,” the Scripture can understand only those who were *under* twenty years of age, in the second year of the exod,

exod, (except Joshua and Caleb,) so that those who allow but six or seven years to Joshua, and as many to the elders, will have that generation to be cut off much sooner than the regular course of human life determines. Whereas, my calculus admits some of them to attain an advanced age, those who were fifteen at the delivery of the law, above eighty years, and the others in proportion; thus affording a full and satisfactory answer to the uncandid and disingenuous insinuations of modern infidelity, “that the contemporaries of Moses and Joshua beheld with careless indifference, and contemptuous neglect, the amazing miracles which were continually demonstrating the presence of their divinity; a conduct that on every known principle of the human mind, is irreconcilable to any reasonable belief of their reality and performance,” (Gibbon,* —*I quote from memory*,) fortified and grounded, as it should appear to be, by the mistaken calculation of chronologists, in allotting so small an interval to Israel’s perseverance in the faith of their religion. This I consider as no small advantage.

But this will be more evident, from a short synopsis which I here subjoin:—

The passage of the Red Sea, 430 years after the promise.

—————Jordan, 470 ——— 40 years after.

Conquest of the land, 476 ——— 6 years after.

Conquest

* The passage of the eloquent historian, which I here *substantially* paraphrase, is Chap. xv. p. 270. 271. Octavo, London, 1802. I have thought it better, for obvious reasons, to leave the passage as it was, although a miserable succadaneum for the grace, the spirit, and the ironical insinuation of the original.

Death of Joshua and the elders, and commence- ment of the first oppres- sion,	}	500	—	24 years after.
Conquest of Chusan,		508	—	8 years after.
End of first repose, by con- quest of Eglon,	}	548	—	40 years after.
End of second repose, by conquest of Jabin,	}	628	—	80 years after.
End of third repose by con- quest of the Midianites...	}	668	—	40 years after.
End of Gideon,		708	—	40 years after.
End of Jephthah,		762	—	54 years after.
End of Abdon,		787	—	25 years after.
End of Samson and Eli, . . .		827	—	40 years after.
End of Samuel and Saul, . . .		867	—	40 years after.
End of David,		907	—	40 years after.
Foundation of the temple, . . .		910	—	3 years <i>complete</i> af- terwards.

These several epochs may be adjusted either to the Hebrew or Septuagint supputation of the years elapsed since the creation.

From this it is evident, that David, being in his seventy-first year at his death, (1 K. 2. v. 11.) his birth coincides with the 836 year, from the promise to Abraham, and 406, from the exod. Now, we learn from many places of Scripture,
(Luke,

(Luke, Matthew, Chronicles,) but particularly from the Book of Ruth, the genealogy of David, which stood thus, (Ruth, 4. 18. &c.) Pharez, Hezron, Ram, Amminadab, Naashon, Salmon, Boaz, Obed, Jesse, David. Pharez, was the son of Judah, by Tamar; Judah, of Jacob; Jacob, of Isaac; and Isaac, of Abraham. Naashon was contemporary to the exod. (Numbers, 1. 7.)

Abraham,	Hezron,	Boaz,
Isaac,	Ram,	Obed,
Jacob,	Amminadab,	Jesse,
Judah,	Naashon,	David,
Pharez,	Salmon,	Solomon.

We may observe, then, that there are seven generations, exclusive, to the exod, and seven to Solomon; the periods must, therefore, be nearly similar, and, in effect, the one is 430, and the other is 406, or rather they also agree exactly; for Isaac was not born till 24 years after the promise. This argument in favour of the 480 years, I hold to be almost invincible; and it is singularly remarkable, that, among the immense variety of authors I have been obliged to consult, in the decision of this question, scarcely one seems to be aware of the nature of a proof drawn from the succession of generations, for which we are indebted to the genius and sagacity of Newton; and none of them dwell upon it.* If they had

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2 A

understood

* I was not aware at the time this was written, that Eusebius makes use of this very argument

understood it, we should have heard less of propositions, to read 580 or 680, or, as Pezron would have it, 873 years, enlarging the period of a generation to 80 or even 120 years, when we are expressly informed, that, even in the days of Abraham, it was the immediate interference of Heaven, that granted him his first son, at a much earlier age; and David, (or Moses, as the psalm is ascribed to him,) himself, informs us, that human life was *then* abridged to the present length; but, because, in questions to be solved by inductive proof, we cannot accumulate too many examples in favour of our hypothesis, we will find numerous authorities in synchronizing the genealogies in the Book of Chronicles: we find 17 generations† computed from Levi to Solomon, (c. 6. 1.); but the successions were, in general, of eldest sons, which gives fewer years to a generation. However, it is an interval of above 700 years, which is somewhat more than eight, to 350 years. In
David's

argument, in defence of the contested text, which he follows, but the enlarged application of the principle, the demonstration of its existence, and the multiplied evidence of its use, still remain, exclusively, the property of the first of philosophers. It is interesting to observe a principle recognized in antiquity from casual associations, suffered thus to lie dormant and unemployed; but when adopted and restated, after the lapse of ages, by superior mind, become the useful instrument in the discovery of important truths.

† Josephus also reckons 13 high-priests from the exod to the foundation of the temple, (Antiq. xx. C. 8. p. 700.) but we are to recollect, that the successions were of men advanced in years, at the time they attained this great dignity; the remaining four were in the 215 years from the descent of Jacob into Egypt, to the exod.

David's line,* which was not by eldest sons, eight generations amount to nearly 400; the difference is not great, which

2 A 2

is

* It is not to be denied that there is a considerable difficulty attending the genealogy of David. Salmon is said to have married Rahab, the woman (as it is generally understood) who preserved the spies in Jericho; (Josh. c. 11.) this many have supposed to be inconsistent with chronology, "as there are then only four generations to David from the exod;" however, we are to consider that Naashon is the only prince of Judah who is mentioned in the Pentateuch, the name of Salmon does not once occur, it should seem therefore that Naashon remained prince of Judah until the last census of the people, taken just before the death of Moses, when there was found none who had been twenty years of age at the exod, (except Joshua and Caleb,) and it is not unlikely that he had died in the plague, immediately preceding; (Numb. 36. 64.) Salmon was born a short time before this census, he might perhaps have had a son by Rahab about the 75th year of the exod, when he was 37 or 38 years of age, and she still very young, since in the 41st year of the exod she is described (Jos. 2. c. 13.) "living in her father's house, and pleading for the lives of him and of her mother, from the Israelites; and if she is principally spoken of in the sequel, it is evident, that it was because of the great services she had rendered to Israel: supposing then, Boaz was born in the 75th year of the exod, since David was born in the 410th, there are 335 years between them. If then, Boaz, "a mighty man of wealth, and an elder of the city," (vide Ruth passim) in his 60th year, married Ruth in the 135th year of the exod, and then Obed marrying in his 50th year, or about the 186th year, might have had Jesse in his sixty-fifth, (as he probably was not his eldest son) or about the 200th, who being a "very aged man in Israel, and having six elder sons grown to man's estate, when David was only 16 or 18; the latter might have been born perhaps about 270, but this number is far removed from 405. I know not how to reconcile it, but by supposing that some of the generations in the house of David are omitted; especially, since Boaz is mentioned, as of "the family of Elimelech," (R. 2. 1.) of whom we find no notice taken in the genealogies in the book of Chronicles; but I may observe, however, in diminution of the difficulty, that Rahab is not mentioned by any Scriptural authority, except St. Matthew, to have married Salmon, and it is not clear that the woman of whom he speaks was the same with the harlot of Jericho. St. Paul and St. James who

is a further proof of our calculus. In chap. 6. v. 39. we have the genealogy of Asaph, fifteen generations from Levi to Solomon, exactly conformable to the line of David. In the *succession* after David, the same precision and accuracy is preserved; and many other corresponding genealogies might be selected, if necessary. On these grounds, then, I hold to the authenticity of the text, and contend, that, however inaccurate we may have been, in arranging the several items in the total, the aggregate itself, could not have exceeded 480 years.

But it will be expected, that I should make some observations on the various evidence in favour of the contrary supputation,

who mention her with commendations, omit this: Josephus also seems unacquainted with it, and yet he enlarges on the rewards granted to her, and it should therefore seem, that it might have been one of the family of Rahab Salmon married, and that perhaps there were two of the name of Salmon, or of Naashon, a circumstance not unusual in the Jewish families: or perhaps it was rather the *families* of Salmon and Naashon, than the individuals that were meant, of which we may find some remarkable instances in the old testament: thus, in the last census, before the entrance into Canaan, (Deut. 26. 23 and passim) Tola and Pua are mentioned as fathers of families, and in Judges, c. x. i. "Tolah, son of Puah," is recorded as judge of Israel, evidently meaning to specify, that he was of the family of the Tolaites and Punites, which were recorded in the book of the law; and it is equally observable, that the names of the other judges may be similarly traced in the record of the families in the books of Moses. (Vide 1. C. c. 2. and passim, James ii. 25. Heb. xi. 13. Josephus Ant. 5. c. 1.) The argument, however, from the genealogy of the other families, and of the priests, the succession of whom is accurately preserved, both in Scripture and in Josephus, from the archives of the temple, remains unshaken and invincible.

putation, which certainly appears plausible and forcible. I shall therefore examine into the systems of Petavius, Walton, Whiston, (the supporter of the text, but on grounds different from my own) Clemens Alexandrinus, Josephus, and the learned Playfair, whose chronological tables, from their accuracy, completeness, and admirable arrangement, have deservedly acquired a very high degree of reputation, and whose objections, consequently, it is important to examine and refute.

Ist. The system of Petavius has had many able and enlightened advocates, and it appears in itself, so defensible and just, that I think it will be necessary to make some remarks on the several items of his table, which I here submit.

A. I. P.					
	Moses	40	years	commenced	3183
	Joshua	14	- - - - -		3223
	Elders	10	- - - - -		3237
1 Opp.	Chushan	8	- - - - -		3247
	Othniel	40	- - - - -		3255
2 Opp.	Moab.	18	- - - - -		3295
	Ehud	80	- - - - -		3313
3 Opp.	Jabin	20	- - - - -		3393
	Deborah	40	- - - - -		3413
4 Op.	Midianites	7	- - - - -		3453
	Gideon	40	- - - - -		3460
	Abimelech	3	- - - - -		3500

Tolah:

						A. I. P.
	Tolah	23		commenced		3503
	Jair	22	-	-	-	3526
5	Servitude	00	-	-	-	00 Included in Jair,
	Jephthah	6	-	-	-	3554
	Ibsan	7	-	-	-	3554
	Elon	10	-	-	-	3561
	Abdon	8	-	-	-	3571
6	Servitude	00	-	-	-	00 Contemporary with the jurisdictions of Samson and Eli.
	Samson	20	-	-	-	3579
	Eli	20	-	-	-	3599
	Samuel and Saul	40	-	-	-	3619
	David	40	-	-	-	3659
	Solomon	40	-	-	-	3699
	4th year of Solomon		-	-	-	3703
Colliguntur ab anno primo Moysis & Exodo ad quantum Salomonis inclusive anni 520.						

3703

3183

 520

On this table we may remark,——

1st. That the learned author, is consistent neither with the system, that would account the servitudes, separately and distinct, from the period of the judges; nor with that which would include them in the several reposes and jurisdictions;

dictions; since he reckons the 4 first as exclusive, and the 2 last as inclusive; and whatever authority the two last may have, that they should be reckoned inclusively, it is evident from the whole series of this enquiry, that the first have still stronger claims to be so included.

2nd. The great objection of making the servitudes commence in the very year of the death of the last deliverer, applies with great force against this system, particularly, it makes the servitude under Jabin, *commence* the very year the jurisdiction, or rather repose under Ehud concluded, forgetting Shamgar succeeded him, whose title to the character of a judge, we have formerly established.

3d. Since he reckons the 40 years of the 6th oppression, under the Philistines, as commencing in the year of Abdon's death, and flowing on contemporaneously with the jurisdictions of Samson and Eli, he has evidently neglected the authority of Scripture, which represents Sampson to have been born *after* the *commencement* of this oppression, so that like Marsham, he seems to commence his jurisdiction with his birth.

4. Although Petavius is justified in granting to Eli but 20 years, by the authority of the Sixtine edition of the Septuagint, and the Polyglott of Walton, still there is some reason to hesitate on adopting this reading against the Hebrew, the Chaldaic Paraphrase, the Targum of Jonathan, the Complutensian

plutensian and modern Septuagints, and all the Versions. (Vide Polyglott, of London, and the Complutensian.)

5. He does not distinguish between repose and jurisdictions.

6th. The authority of St. Paul, (Acts 13. 19.) alleged by Petavius, against the text of 1. Kings vi. 1. will by no means accord with his calculus, as we shall see in the sequel, where that text shall be particularly examined. Petav. Vol. 2. p. 44. Edit. Antwerp. 1703.

II. Walton, in his prolegomena, declares for amending the present reading, 1. kings vi. 1. and substituting 580: his table however is liable to all the severity of animadversion—part of it is as follows. p. 9. Prolegom. edit. London.

Entrance into the land 41 year of the exod.

Conquest 46

Division 47

End of Chusan or

1 Oppression 55 the intermediate are reckoned consecutively

End of Jephthah 372

Abdon died 397

End of Phil. 437 after 40 years. Opp.

Samp. dies 457

Eli ——— 497

Sam. and Saul 537

David 577

Solomon 5th. 581

Saul

Little will be necessary to overthrow the authority of this system ;

1st. It commences the oppression of Chusan the year after the partition, contrary to the express and reiterated declarations of Scripture, to which we have so often referred the reader.

2d. Sampson, instead of "judging Israel in the days of the Philistines," succeeds their oppression.

3. Servitudes are made to commence uniformly in the year, concluding the administration of the last judge.

4. Jurisdiction and repose are held to be synonymous—contrary, as we have shewn, to evidence and reason.

III. Whiston, in his Dissertations, prefixed to Josephus, attempts to reconcile the latter to the text of 1 Kings. 6. 1. his system is as follows:—

	Moses	40
	Joshua	25
	Elders	18
1 Ser. of	Chushan	8
	Othniel	40
2 Servitude	Moab	18
	Ehud	8 vide infra
	Shamgar	1

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2 B

3 Opp.

* It is observable, Walton publishes a letter of one of the Capelli to his brother, approving of this system.

3 Opp. Jabin	20	
Barak	40	
4 Ser. Midian	7	
Gideon	40	
Abimelech	3	
Tolah	23	
Jair	22	
5 Op. Ammonites	18	
Jephthah	6	
Ibsan	7	
Elon	8	
Abdon	10	
6 Op. Philistines	$42\frac{1}{2}$	Sampson and Eli included.
Samuel	$12\frac{1}{2}$	
Saul	20	
David	40	
Solomon	$3\frac{1}{2}$	
<hr/>		
480 $\frac{1}{2}$		

1. Whiston, in this table, although it is constructed with great ingenuity, has not avoided the imputation which we have objected to Petavius of inconsistency, since he has neither followed the system of computing the numbers, wholly exclusive or inclusive, as we see at the sixth oppression, he includes Sampson and Eli.

2. The

2. The death of Othniel is 91 years after the passage of the Jordan, which exposes the system to the observations made before on the prolongation of human life.

3. Giving Ehud but 8 years, is against the current of all the MS. versions and translations of Scripture, all the copies of Josephus extant, all the ancient fathers and chronologists who, (except one,) unanimously concur with scripture in granting to the second repose 80 years, and although Theophilus may have read (as is alleged by Whiston) 8 years in his copy, is it to be received against this weight of evidence and cloud of witnesses?

4. Is it to be supposed that Ehud should deliver Israel, and that Israel should relapse into idolatry, as the text expresses, (4. Jud. 1) *after* the death of Ehud, be delivered again by Shamgar; and be subjected to the king of Hazor in the short space of 9 years?

5. The short period granted to Samuel is agreeable neither to scripture, to reason, or to the opinions of the ancient chronologists.

6. If Saul only reigned 20 years, then with the 12 of Samuel, the sum does not accord with St. Paul in granting 40 years to Samuel and Saul, as most understand it, or in giving 40 to Saul alone.

7. The difference of the terms "repose" and "jurisdiction" is not admitted, and the precision of scripture is therefore affected.

IV. The opinion of Clemens Alexandrinus, which has been urged in favour of the lengthened calculus, independent of the particular objections to which it is liable, is contradicted by the various and inconsistent computations which he mentions and neglects, but which at least demonstrate, that the sentiments of those, who rejected in his time, the authority of the Hebrew text, were neither consistent or reasonable. "Many," says he, "reckon from Joshua to David 450 years, but I compute to the death of David 423 years and 7 months: some from Moses to Solomon account 595 years, others 676; but if to the 450 from Joshua to David, you add the 40 years of Moses in the wilderness, as many of David, and the 80 years of the age of Moses at the exod, there will arise 610 years from the birth of Moses, to the end of the reign of David."

450 from beginning of Joshua till beginning of David.

40 of Moses in the desert.

80 age of Moses at the exod

40 of David

610

"but more accurately, if to the 523 years and 7 months, to the death of David we add the 120 of Moses, and the 40 of Solomon, the sum will amount to 683 years 7 months.

Y.	M.	
523	7	to the death of David from Joshua
		120 years

Y.	
120	years of Moses
40	of Solomon
<hr/>	
683	y.

Again he says, “ to the time of Samuel there are 463 years and 7 months;” this sum, subducted from the 523 years and 7 months to the end of the reign of David, leaves 60 years from Samuel to the death of David, so that the calculus of the 463 years and 7 months concludes with the election of Saul, since he uniformly attributes but 20 years to Saul after “ the renewal of the kingdom,” which, with the 40 of David, completes the 60 years before deduced ;—this account will however grant us 643 years and 7 months from the birth of Moses till the death of David.

453	7	from Joshua to the end of Samuel and Saul
20		Saul alone
40		David
120		
<hr/>		
643	7	

Add then the 40 of Solomon, and we derive 683 years 7 months as before ; which proves that his present numbers are really those he intended to propose ; if we then subduct the 36 years of Solomon and the 80 of Moses, we will derive 567 years and 7 months, as the interval from the exod to the foundation of the temple.

Before

Before I proceed to consider the arguments deducible from this system in favour of our hypothesis, I shall submit a table of the separate items, from which this aggregate is collected; and as Vignoles appears to have laboured with the happiest success on the chronology of Clemens, I shall give his summary in a corresponding column, and insert such of his corrections as appear most judicious and requisite to form the aggregate. The first column is literally transcribed from the edition of Sylburgius (Lug. Bat. 238.) in which there are some inaccuracies that I am uncertain whether to attribute to the errata of the press, or of the MS. but I shall mark them as they occur.

Joshua acted as captain of the host, (bellum gessit) sixty-six years. lat. lxxvj. Gr. $\epsilon\tau\eta$ $\xi\eta$ which is 68; $\xi\iota$ would be 66.—It is observable, however, Vignoles seems to have read 65, supposing it combined the 40 years in the wilderness, and the twenty-five which Clemens afterwards assigns to his government, and with which we commence the table. (Vignoles, p. 13. p. 203.)

	SYLBURGIUS.	VIGNOLES.
In terra illa bona quievit 25 πεντε καὶ εικοσι	(vide infra	27
Chusan 8 - - - - -	- - - - -	35
Othniel 50 ἑτη v.	- - - - -	85
Eglon 18 Lat. 28.	- - - - -	103
Aod 80 - - - - -	- - - - -	183
Jabin 20 - - - - -	- - - - -	203
		Ejus

Ejus tempore Debora prophetissa Pontifex Ozius filius Riesu
SYLBURGIUS. VIGNOLES,

Barak	40	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	243
Midianites	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	250
Gideon	40	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	290
Abimelech	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	293
Tolah (Boleas filius Be-										
dan filii Charran)	23	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	316
Ammonites	18	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	334
Jepthah	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	340
Ibsan (Abatthan)	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	347
Elon (Ebron)	8 (Gr. 10.)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	355
Abdon (Æglon)	8 vide infra	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	263
Philistines	40	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	403
Eli	40	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	443 M
Samuel	20 7 m. vide infra (Gr. 27 ys.)									463 7
Saul (renovatus)	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	483 7
David	40	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	523 7
Solomon	40	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	563 7
Moses	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	683 7

so that from the birth of Moses to the end of Solomon are 638 years and 7 months, and from the commencement of the jurisdiction of Joshua, to the end of the jurisdiction of Samuel, appears to be 463 years and 7 months, as Clemens has himself computed them.

But

But as the reader has doubtless observed some deviations, both from Scripture, and from the present reading of Clemens in the summary of Vignoles, I must subjoin his defence.

1. Clemens, although he assigns 25 years to Joshua in his catalogue, yet immediately afterwards mentions 27 years as the duration of his magistracy, “according to the book that bears his name,” and although we do not find any such period in the book of Josephus at present, he probably meant, it was the opinion of the generality of authors in his time, as in effect we see Theophilus, Eusebius, St. Augustine, and Syncellus agree in allotting him this period.*

2. After the mention of Æglon or Abdon, we read those words in Clemens: “Some join to the forty of Elon, the seven of Ibsan; the reading “40 years” being evidently spurious, Hervetus translates it “four,” and Usher agrees in the amendment because three or four is the number attributed to Eglon, by Nicephorus, and for the very obvious reason, that it is to be included in the “seven” of Ibsan as the greater number; but Archbishop Potter and Vignoles propose the simple and evident correction of reading $\eta' \epsilon\tau\eta$ in place of $\mu' \epsilon\tau\eta$, in which I concur.

3. The

* Probably Clemens might have read such a number in his copy of the Septuagint, into the text or margin of which it might have crept, from the note of the transcriber or the original possessor following the received opinion of his time,—a remarkable instance of which practice, we have in the Sixtine Septuagint, edit. Rome, 1580, where the fortunes of Jeroboam, in Egypt, are related more circumstantially, than in any other Version. Pezron. 229. edit. & ut supra.

3. The original of Clemens bears "Samuel succeeded Heli, and governed 27 years," ἔτη ἑικοσι ἑπτὰ κατασχών. However, no ancient author gives 27 years to Samuel alone, or to Saul and Samuel in conjunction, but a number agree in granting 20 years to Samuel, among whom we may mention the author of the Chronicle of Alexandria, Maximus, Cedrenus, and Chronicon Latino-barbarum of Scaliger: these 20 years are doubtless, those, during which the ark remained at Kirjath-jearim, to which, if we add the 7 months it was in the possession of the Philistines, we have 20 years and 7 months, so that it should appear the passage of Clemens should be corrected thus, "ἔτη ἑικοσι μῆνας ἑπτὰ κατασχών." By this amendment, we derive the seven months mentioned so frequently by Clemens, a period which is no otherwise deducible. Admitting the corrections of Vignoles, which appear equally happy and just, we collect the sums assigned by Clemens, and the arguments we derive from them in the support of our system, are by no means inconsiderable or unimportant.

I. We remark the supputation of Clemens makes the first oppression succeed *immediately* on the conclusion of the jurisdiction of Joshua, without estimating or admitting the period usually assigned to the government of the Elders, during which, "Israel served the Lord," either in the idea, that the period of the Elders must be the same as that of the jurisdiction of Othniel, who himself was one of them, as being a distinguished warrior at the conquest of the land—or as

including it in the years of Joshua, and understanding the term by which he mentions his administration *after* the conquest for 25 years, viz. "he rested in that good land," as equivalent and identical to that mentioned in the book of Joshua, "and the land had rest from war," which we have shewn to signify the interval succeeding the conquest, to the wars of the elders or to the conquest of Chusan.—In either case it will be evident and admitted that my system is more consistent and just, in granting 30 years to Joshua and the elders conjointly, which adding the six years of war to the 25 of rest, is conformable to the calculus of Clement ; especially, as it is evident and *demonstrable* from Scripture, that after the death of Joshua, the elders led out the tribes to successful enterprise, and of course were *not* subjugated in the year of his death, (1. Judg. pass.) and here is no opportunity for the subterfuge, "that the success of some tribes, and the servitude of others*" may have (as is probable in other instances) been partial and contemporaneous, since we are told *all the tribes* consulted the Lord, "who should go up" against their enemies ; which shews that they were both united and independent at that period.

2. In granting 50 years to Othniel, in which many of the ancient chronologists concur, it should seem he originally meant

* Perhaps, indeed, he meant to say, bellum gessit זמנא, ז, and that the ξ is a mistake of the transcriber.

meant to include the 8 years of the first oppression in this period, and to suppose the first repose of 40 years commenced *after* his victory; so that his jurisdiction began probably two years before the invasion of Chusan, to complete the 50 years—agreeably to which, we find the Paschal Chronicle allots him but 32 *years*, in which it would include the first oppression, but inaccurately; as the 8 years of the first oppression are requisite to complete the period in Scripture: If this mode of solution is adopted, it will afford us strong ground of argument for our *more consistent* calculus in accounting the *remaining* servitudes as inclusive to the reposes.*

3. He omits Jair, evidently intentionally, as it appears by his aggregates, which would be inaccurate by inserting his periods; holding his jurisdiction as I presume, contemporary with the 18 years oppression of the Ammonites. The jurisdiction of Jair was 22 years, (Jud. 10. 8.) and perhaps the two

2 c 2

years

* This solution may appear dubious, but it is not otherwise conceivable, how so many could have agreed to extend the period of Othniel, as Eusebius (Præp. Evan. x. c. 13.) Sulpičius Severus, Maximus, and Zonaras; or how they could have avoided recollecting, he must have been one of the elders. The two years necessary to complete the calculus, may be the two assigned by several ancient authors, to the jurisdiction of the ancients. (Vide Playfair p. 11.) The amiable and learned reformer Melancthon, seems to have been of an opinion somewhat similar to this, when he granted 8 years to Othniel, supposing, as I understand him, that he was captain against the enemy, during the whole of the oppression of Chushan, which considering his established character, previous to that oppression, is by no means improbable. Chron. Carionis p. 44. Aureliæ Allob. 1610.

years added to Joshua, and the two added to Othniel (if the solution in the last observation is admitted) to complete his 50 above the 40 of repose, and the 8 of the first servitude will grant us the 4 years of Jair deficient; so that adopting those amendments, we might read in the catalogue of Clemens, instead of "the Ammonites 18 years," "Jair 22 years," and the totals would remain unvaried.

4. He evidently agrees with the Scripture and our calculus, in accounting the years of Sampson contemporary to the 5th oppression of the Philistines, since he omits his years.

5. It is clear he does not reckon any interregnum between the conclusion of the jurisdiction of Eli, and the commencement of that of Samuel, and thereby considerably strengthens our arguments on this epoch, against the authority of Vignoles and his followers.

6. Since Clemens does not admit this interregnum, and (as amended by Vignoles) allots only 20 years and 7 months to the administration of Samuel; he grants a great degree of versimilitude to my conjectures on the text (Saml. 7. 2.) on which so much stress has been laid, and shews us it was probably in the second or third year of Saul, the ark was brought back to Shiloh.

7. Admitting the correction of Vignoles in the point of Samuel's government, and adding the twenty years of Saul after the renewal of the kingdom, we derive 40 years and 7 months for the duration of the authority of both, agreeably

ably to our interpretation of St. Paul, (Act. 13. 19.) and to the arguments we have urged against Josephus.

8. In granting only twenty years to Saul, “after the renewal of the kingdom,” which was before the rejection of Saul, he is clearly at variance with Josephus, who allots him 20 years “*after* the death of Samuel;” and still more so, when Clemens declares expressly, “Saul died two years after Samuel,” a great authority for the reasoning we have submitted against Josephus and Vignoles.

9. He rejects the supputation of St. Paul, as our system obliges us.

But while Clemens affords us so many arguments in favour of the hypothesis we adopt, he is obnoxious to several of the objections we have urged against the adherents and supporters of the enlarged interval. He has contrary to every rule of sound criticism, made the different servitudes succeed in the very year of the death of the preceding judge; he has confounded the sense and meaning of the term “repose” and “jurisdiction;” he has, in some instances, deviated from the express declaration of Scripture (as in the article of Jair) he has made the 40 years of Eli, *succeed* the twenty of Sampson, which he admits concluded with the Philistine oppression, thus making Sampson complete the deliverance he was only to begin; and he has contradicted the computation of Jepl-thah to the Ammonites; but if we subduct the years of the several oppressions, and include them in the years assigned to the judges, as our system necessitates and determines, his
calculus

calculus, with a very few obvious corrections, completely agrees both with our hypothesis and with the disputed text. (1 Kings, 6. 1.) Thus:—

	Y. M.
523	7 from passage of the Jordan to the end of Moses
4	of Solomon
<hr/>	
527,	7
Subduct 111	of Servitudes
<hr/>	
416,	7
Add 22	of Jair, omitted by Clemens
<hr/>	
438,	7
40	in the Wilderness, preceding the passage of
<hr/>	
	the Jordan
458,	7
2	deducted from the number assigned by Scrip-
<hr/>	
	ture to Abdon
480,	7

I have chosen to separate the items, as in the preceding table, in order that they may be more completely obvious and evident to the reader; but it is particularly important and deserving of remark, that Clemens professes in his computation on the subjects relative to the Hebrew records, to follow Josephus with the most guarded accuracy. “Josephus,” says he, “reckons from Moses to David 585 years, and from
David

David to the second of Vespasian 1179 years." (p. 341.) it is true, indeed, that the first of those numbers is not at present to be found in Josephus, but the second is still read. (Bellum. Jud. VI. 4. secundum Ruffini distinctionem vero, 18.) It appears to be reckoned from the taking of Jerusalem and the removal of the seat of government there in the seventh year of his reign; and similarly, it should seem, that the first interval is probably reckoned from the exod to the *end* of David, or rather to the association of Solomon in the government, about two years before the death of his father,* so that the fourth year of his *separate* reign might be as Josephus assigns it,) coincident with the 592nd year of the exod. In this view, the remark of Clemens in regard to the first epoch, whether he derived it from the expression of Josephus, (as is most probable, since the second period is *simply* assigned) or whether he deduced it from the separate intervals of the historian, is particularly important; as it affords a new authority and argument, that the numbers at present read, respecting

* In another part of the history, Josephus reckons from the "first building (κτίσις) of the temple by Solomon, till the second year of Vespasian, 1130 years and 7 months," (Chap. x. Lib. 7. Bell. Jud.) which is above 48 years less than the former account, 1179. Perhaps Josephus meant to reckon from the *dedication* in the 8th year of Solomon, and the 40 of David would make up the deficiency; but this would be inaccurate, as David reigned 7 years in Hebron, before the conquest of Jerusalem; but at all events, his remaining 33, and the 8 first of Solomon afford an aggregate which differs little from the defect of 48 years—the items of the historian, experience has taught us should not be too closely pressed.

respecting the æra of the foundation of the temple, are the same as those, which Clemens followed, and consequently, that in the view of Clemens, Josephus did not admit the interregnum, some have wished to attribute to him between Eli and Samuel, as we may derive that sum from the table in Clemens, without recurring to that interval—Thus, Clemens reckons 523 years and 7 months from the commencement of Joshua to the end of David, the 40 years in the Wilderness make 567 7, and the 23 of Tolah who is omitted by Josephus, make 586 7, while the 22 of Jair, who seems as we have seen to be intentionally omitted by Clemens, give 585 7.* It is very remarkable, that of the two judges immediately succeeding each other, one should be omitted by Josephus whose period is 23 years, and the other should be omitted by Clemens whose period is 22 years; the insertion of either of whom, grants us the period attributed to the Jewish historian by Clemens; so that subducting the servitudes from Josephus as from Clemens, the interval (1 Kings, 6. 1.) remains.

V. The system of the learned Playfair is more bold, daring, and uncompromising; he is not satisfied merely to suppose an error

* From this we see the inaccuracy of Vignoles, who would wish to press this testimony of Clemens into his favour, and to suppose Josephus reckoned merely to the beginning of David, in which case the calculus would never answer; whereas we now see it completely agrees. The remaining testimonies of Josephus (Ant. xx. c. 8. Ruf. & 1. C. 2. Aponi) for reckoning 612 years to the foundation of the temple are consequently corruptions *after* the time of Clemens.

error in the numerical items in the text, he would absolutely reject it as interpolated and suppositious—as the result of Jewish fraud, executed without ingenuity, and open on the simplest enquiry to detection and exposure. His arguments certainly possess much of the plausibility of conviction, and are proposed with all the confidence of success; indeed the author leaves the reader in doubt whether to admire more the singular sagacity and research, which, after the lapse of so many ages, has happily succeeded in rescuing them from the rust of antiquity, and bringing them adorned with all the lights of criticism and philosophy into day;—or the singular fatality that concealed from the enquiries of the learned and the investigations of the wise, truths, at once so evident and so simple, lying as it were embossed upon the very surface of the authorities, from which they were derived, and only requiring to be known and to be recognized, in order to destroy the influence of pernicious or unsubstantiated testimony, both injurious to the authority of Scripture, and at variance with the conclusions of reason;—but I shall state the arguments of the learned author in nearly his own words.

1. The assigned period is not found in any ancient Hebrew or Greek copies, and it is not in the parallel passage of Chronicles, 11. 3. 2.

2ndly. None of the ancient Jewish or Christian chronologers have mentioned it.

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3dly. That all have computed by the times of the Judges, which they would not have done, had the passage under review been known to them; for *that* would have been to have rejected a certain mode of computation in favour of one that is not absolutely so.

4thly. Josephus refers to this text, but found no such number in it. He says, that “ Solomon began to build the temple in the fourth year of his reign, in the second month, 592 years after the exodus of the Israelites out of Egypt.”

5thly. Origen too, in his commentary on John’s Gospel, cites this text without the number, which shews it was not known in his days.

Lastly, That no writer, Jewish or Christian, ever quoted or observed this passage, until Eusebius took notice of it about the middle of the third century, which makes it highly probable that an interpolation was made not long before that period, founded perhaps on a pretended traditional interpretation of the Jews, that the years of the servitudes ought to be reckoned in the years of the judges.

In

* He however acknowledges the servitudes of the Ammonites began in the days of Jair, and counts 307 years to Jephthah; “ the last servitude under the Philistines is likewise to be included in the corresponding years of the judges—they commenced about the time of Sampson’s nativity, (Judg. xiii.) and they terminated about the time of his death (Judg. xv. 20); so that he must have judged Israel during the last 20 years of this servitude. Afterwards there was an anarchy of 20 years, as may be collected from Saml. iii. 1.—iv. 15.—vi. 1.—vii. 1. 2. and viii. 1.—5.) Unless this interval be admitted,

In answer to this formidable apparatus of reasoning and objection, I shall consider, I hope with impartiality and candour, the several arguments that have been detailed, and trust I shall be able to demonstrate, that the intrinsic weight and importance of the whole, should not be sufficient to induce us to reject the authority of the text, or to surrender the principles on which we have attempted to explain it.

I. If, indeed, the *assertion* contained in this statement, was accurate or demonstrable, little would be the resources of argument, or little the hopes of conviction in favour of the passage: Ingenuity might cavil, dexterity might parry, and talent might sophisticate in vain; the weapons of controversy would be wielded without success, and the unbiassed voice of truth must ultimately triumph. But when *I know* that this *assertion* is false, in so much as we can depend on the fidelity of all the versions and all the manuscripts which industry could accumulate or collect during so many ages, and when *I perceive* the learned author, who has proposed it with so much hardihood and decision, has *only* been enabled to derive it as an inductive result from the few circumstances

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mitted, Samuel must have been too young to have succeeded Eli, who died in the beginning of it; and he could not have been in the decline of life when he anointed Saul to be king, 1. Saml. viii. 1. Upon the whole, computing the years of the period upon the principles already pointed out, and assigning 25 years as the term of Joshua's administration, and 2 as the interval between his death and the first servitude, according to Josephus, Apicamus, and other ancient Jewish and Christian writers, the sum will amount 540 years."

of casual variety in the reading of the Scriptures, and casual conformity in the opinions of the earlier chronologists, which he *afterwards* remarks: I feel I cannot too severely reprobate and condemn this total neglect of sound reasoning and candid investigation, which would so far abandon the principles of equitable dissent and justifiable scepticism, or so far surrender the dictates of reason to the suggestions of system; *direct* evidence to *positional* argument; sensible proofs to preconceived principles; the recorded opinions of the learned, to the prejudices of individual persuasion, as to deliver the result of an inductive conclusion for the statement of an admitted truth; as to propose the correction of every known version of Scripture, on the grounds of a few futile and inconsequent deviations, the weakness of the evidence for which, we shall soon expose and demonstrate; and to add the authority of a name, not unknown or unrespected, to a charge of interpolation in the sacred writings, which, *if true*, could only serve to alarm the fears of the timid and the unlearned, who would not stop to examine into the evidence of a statement, delivered with so little hesitation, and recommended by so many titles to credibility and belief; or to enhance the triumph of the infidel, who will not fail to aggrandize with this concession, his catalogue of pious frauds, interpolated passages, important variations, and inconsistent testimonies; but if, as I hope to establish *it is false* and unfounded, what shall be said of the logical accuracy and ingenious reasoning of
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the writer, who would venture to propose it as a decisive argument, and rely on it as an admitted principle; who lays down his premises in gratuitous assertion, and deduces his conclusion in triumphant demonstration?

Qui cum præsumpserit majorem atque minorem
Ex male præsumptis urgeat Ergo sequi.
Owen. Epig. 10. 46.

To say nothing of the soundness of that rhetoric, which first proposes the strongest and most unobjectionable of all arguments, by denying the authority of the only record produced against its principles, and then, instead of resting on this substantial invalidation of the contrary testimony, or of dwelling on *this* great ground of authority in its own favour, weakens its force and dissipates its effect, by the addition of other testimonies equally inconsequent and unauthenticated, independent and unconnected; sources, which themselves are unproved, and may be retorted against his conclusion and his cause.

But to consider the remainder of his arguments separately—
I. It is not in the parallel passage (11 C. 3. 2.) admitted; but the conclusion that it is suppositious in the text, (1 K. 6. 1.) is by no means deducible, because we know there are many passages in each, that differ materially; because there are many facts, circumstances, and statements in the one, not to
be

be found in the other; many discussed with the minuteness of detail, in the book of Kings, and merely alluded in the parallel passages of the corresponding history; because the evidence of each is independent and *sui generis*; because they are separate records by separate authors, and in many places, evidently derived from distinct sources; because the very parallel verse referred to by the learned author, differs in other points, from the contested text, as well as in the omission of the interval from the exod, which sufficiently shews it was not intended to be even a *partial* transcript, much less a collated copy: It is redundant, for it adds, “and on the second day of the month,” which is not in the contested text; it is deficient, for it does not mention the name of the month, which is assigned in the book of Kings. But it is in vain to reason against a point so inconclusive and indefensible; let any person compare the parallel passages of those books referred to, in the margins of the text, and he will then acknowledge, that a casual omission is not to be received as evidence of an intentional disagreement; that the absence of *literal* exactness, is the best test of unstipulated and unbought conformity; and that the purposes of fraud (if any had been intended) would have been more perfectly attained by the addition, equally facile of the omitted number in the parallel verse, than by leaving it to critical acumen, and unhesitating scepticism, like that of the learned author’s, to reject with unscrupulous contempt, a passage of one book
as

as “spurious and interpolated,” from the fact of it being omitted in another, where it might naturally occur: but waiving these obvious considerations, we find, I may remark, that in the account of the dedication of the temple, (1 Kings, 8. 21.) that Solomon in his affecting address to the congregation of Israel, assembled to witness the ceremony, informs them that he has now “set a place for the ark, wherein is the covenant of the Lord which he made with our fathers, *when he brought them out of the land of Egypt;*” and in the parallel passage, (11. C. 6. 11.) the latter part of the verse is completely omitted. Is it then inconsistent or extraordinary, that the book referring so particularly to the exod, should determine the exact interval elapsed from that great event; the commencement of the Jewish polity; and the epoch of the national separation, as the chosen people of God. Is it surprising, that relating the grand completion of the edifice of the popular faith, the last best consummation of the promises of God, —the final expectation of Israel,—and the point to which all the ceremonials of religion ultimately converged; he should refer to the period adopted and used as the great epoch of their history and annals? rather it is so familiar, agreeable, and consistent with the usual style and genius of the Hebrew records: It is so far the characteristic of the Eastern writers, that I should much sooner suppose, the interval was omitted by the mistake of the transcriber and copyist, in the book of Chronicles, than draw a conclusion from *this* casual omission, against

against the fidelity of the contested text, where it is yet found. But still farther, the period that the temple was building, the year commemorated by its encænia, or the month of its completion, are not mentioned or even alluded to, in the book of Chronicles, when each is recorded in the parallel history: Is it then, I repeat, inconsistent or extraordinary, that a book so much more precise, accurate, and exact in determining those comparatively unimportant and minute points, should have been equally so, in marking a more necessary epoch? an æra with which, as we have shewn during the progress of this enquiry, the whole course, and series, and substance, and completeness of the Scripture chronology, as affecting the history of religion, and of the national chronology as affecting the history and fortunes of the Jewish state, were intimately concerned; and *this* when the other great epochs are so carefully recorded, and so exactly limited in the Hebrew writings. (v. Ex. 12. 40, 41.) Surely, this argument proposed with so much emphasis, and delivered with so much decision, will no longer be insisted on—it is equally futile, inconclusive, and inconsequent.

2. The next argument is certainly *partially* true, though it has been improperly enunciated; and it should appear not altogether ingenuous in the learned author, to produce as an argument, merely a negative proof, derived almost exclusively from unacknowledged sources, or from brief notices, scattered through the works of later authors by whom they were

were introduced, only as collateral testimonies to some insulated facts they were recording; and which of course were totally independent of the system, or the principles of the writers from whom they had been quoted. *He* surely was aware that the first *professional* chronologist among the Christian writers was Julius Africanus, in the beginning of the second century, and Africanus, I shall shew in the sequel, was well acquainted with the contested verse; and it is clear that the others who may incidentally refer to the chronology of Scripture, are not to be produced in evidence against the existence of the text; any more than the opinion of Petavius or the moderns, who reject its computations while they acknowledge its authority; with respect to the Jews, from the very first they have been unanimous, without a single exception, in supporting it.

3. The third is already answered, in the reply to the last objection. It is indeed true, that the *generality* have pursued the system attributed to them, but it by no means follows, that it was from an ignorance of the contested passage, or a disregard of its authority; it originated in the same spirit of system, the same principles of inductional and problematical reasoning, which have induced many of the moderns to reject or to paraphrase it, according to the particular hypotheses they may have adopted; but it is by no means true, that the ancient chronologists, because they do not follow the supputation of the text, were consequently ignorant

of its existence, or disposed to regard it as spurious or interpolated, as will be very evident to any one consulting Syncellus, who discusses this very question (p. 176. Edit. ut supra) at large, and particularly mentions the reasoning of Eusebius, which he opposes by his own : he acknowledges the authority of the Verse, but contends, for an error in the interpretation of it, because it should be understood “ as separating the servitudes and oppressions, and only recording the periods of prosperity and peace;” and this error, which has been renewed and restated by Vossius and his followers in a later age, was the only cause that the ancient chronologists do not mention, or *seem* to neglect the computation of the book of Kings. We see then the force and value of an argument drawn from their silence against its authenticity; their logic and their criticism, in so paraphrasing the text, may have been inconclusive and inaccurate, and all the reasonings of this essay, have for an object to prove that they were; but their principles of computation were justly founded and deduced from the exposition they premised; and little indeed did these venerable supporters of all *they held* valuable and important in life—the truth and authority of those Scriptures which were the rule of their faith, and foundation of their hopes, little doubtless, when however ignorantly, restoring the chronology of the sacred writings, did they ever look forward to the period when the very systems and hypotheses built on the supposition of this text, and resting *only* on an interpretation which

which they held correct, of its meaning, and design would be urged and brought as evidence against its authenticity and its truth.—I shall in the sequel, assign the probable causes of their exposition of the text.

4. This is a very remarkable instance of an author being brought as evidence against the truth of a record, which his testimony, on the very shewing of the person alledging it, goes to establish and confirm. The authority of Josephus, can, by the last effort of human ingenuity, be considered but in two modes—either he intended (as the learned author has supposed) to refer to the text in question; and *then* he becomes an advocate the more in defence of its authenticity; or he did not, in which case his testimony is quite indifferent to the decision. On the first alternative, it is evident to the simplest understanding, that he *did* find a number and interval in the text, since he has assigned one; and of course that the arguments laid down with so much emphasis and decision by the learned author, to prove *that* the part of the verse in which the period is delivered, is spurious and interpolated, are equally inaccurate and indefensible; that in a word it was read in the history, previously to the *redaction* of the canonical books by the doctors of the Tiberiade, and consequently was not inserted by them, or depending on their traditions; so that the only question that could arise, would be between the comparative accuracy of the Versions and MSS. of Josephus, and those of the Hebrew text; in the decision of which, (more par-

ticularly in the *numerical* passages,) no one, I believe, will find it very difficult to deliver an opinion, not unfavourable to the principles of our hypothesis. In the second alternative, or that Josephus does not intend to quote or to refer to this verse, his authority is of course, not to be alledged against its fidelity; and the argument of the learned author is not strengthened by producing it. It may be that it is to the parallel verse in the book of Chronicles, which we have examined at length, in our observations on his first argument, that Josephus is alluding, and that the number assigned is his own; in which case we have already seen how inconclusive any hypothetical positions founded upon the corresponding testimony are, for the rejection of the contested verse.

I shall consider the passage of Josephus more at length in the sequel.

5th. This would indeed be a most serious charge, were it just or defensible. I have consulted the commentary of Origen on St. John's gospel; I have examined the different passages he has alledged from the old Testament, and I have found the quotation to which the learned author undoubtedly alludes; with some surprise, I confess, yet with unmixed satisfaction, to discover so little authority for the conclusion which he has hastily deduced. Origen, in the passage under review, is discussing the reason for the answer of the Jews to our Saviour, who was speaking as the Evangelist expresses it, "of the temple of his body" "forty and six years,
was

was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?" Origen enquires into the evidence for this assertion, and the manner by which it can be reconciled to the account in the book of Kings, that the temple was "completed in seven years;" he consequently quotes some verses from the original authority to which he had referred. Would it not have been importunate, redundant, and inapplicable, to produce in the discussion of the question, "*what* period was consumed in the erection of the temple;" an account of the particular epoch and interval elapsed *since* the commencement of the Jewish commonwealth? Origen was not so puerile and unselecting a writer, although by no means a sound or judicious critic, as to be guilty of the unmeaning verbiage, which the learned author would desire from him; he quotes the verse as his authority, but he quotes it without any extraneous, unnecessary, and redundant particulars: he produces from the record, just so much as will bear upon his subject—what will illustrate and not burthen,—what will establish and not overload it. The various adjuncts, which transcription *only* might accumulate and compile, are not, even by the voluminous Origen, *always* brought together, and the learned grammarian, while he may not be displeased at an opportunity of discovering the variety and compass of his reading, is sensible that the quotation of *that* part of an original authority, which serves to explain or enlighten the subject of his enquiry, would
be

be just as sufficient to display it, as if he introduced what was only accessory and succedaneous. However, independent of this, Origen was by no means so accurate and correct in his quotations, that we may always rely upon the conclusion they would seem to indicate: it is very evident to the inquisitive reader of his works, that he frequently alledges his authorities from memory, and the lapses of which he has been guilty, are obvious *hints* against an unhesitating reliance on the fidelity of his statements.

I shall produce an example of this which is rather particular, I give it in the translation of Vigerus, as *verbal* accuracy is not here requisite or necessary.

Quod autem ipsi (Satanæ) peccator tradatur Paulus te docebit, ubi quidem loquens de Phygello & Hermogene “quos tradidi,” inquit, “Satanæ ut discant non blasphemare. In the passage, however, in which St. Paul speaks thus, (1. Tim. 1. 20.) it is *Hymenæus and Alexander* whom he mentions; and in another text, (2 Tim. 1. 15.) he speaks merely of Hermogenes and Phygellus being “turned away from him.” (Origenis Commen. in S. S. cura Huetii, Commen. on Jeremiah Hom. 18. Vol. 1. p. 179.)

As, however, the learned and inquisitive reader may desire to see at length the passage of Origen, on which so much stress has been laid, I have transcribed and collated it with some accuracy, with the Sixtine Septuagint, to which only, and the version in the London Polyglott, does it agree. It
may

may be remarked, that like them, it couples the latter part of the chapter in which the period consumed in the building of the temple is recorded with the first verses, mentioning the year of its foundation; while the Complutensian Greek, adheres to the Hebrew reading: it is also not to be overlooked, that Origen denominates the second month "nisan," instead of Zif, which all the MSS. and versions retain without variation, so that, perhaps, we are not pushing the argument of induction too far, in assuming *this*, as another observable instance of a quotation alledged from memory; and if, on a comparison of the parallel passages I have produced, it should appear that the Sixtine version is, *probably* that which was used by Origen, it must not be forgotten, that *it retains* the interval from the exod, which the learned author supposes to have been omitted in Origen's copy:—perhaps a more accurate collation of the passages quoted in his works, with the Sixtine version would go strongly to confirm its identity with the copy he used.

HUETHI ORIGINES PARIS, 1679.

Γεγραπται γαρ ἐν τῇ τρίτῃ των
 βασιλειων ὡς ητοίμασαν τες λιθες
 καὶ τὰ ξύλα τρισιν ἔτεσι ἐν δὲ
 τῷ τεταρτῷ ἔτει μηνὶ δευτέρῳ, βα-
 σιλευοντος τοῦ βασιλέως σολο-
 μωντος

SIXTINE EDIT. ROMÆ, 1580.

Καὶ ἐγενήθη ἐν τῷ τεσσαρα-
 κοστῷ καὶ τετρακοσιοστῷ ἔτει τῆς
 ἐξοδου υἱῶν ἰσραὴλ ἐξ αἰγυπτου τῷ
 ἔτει τῷ τετάρτῳ ἐν μηνὶ τῷ δευ-
 τέρῳ βασιλεύοντος τῷ βασιλέως
 σαλωμοῦ

μῶντος ἐπὶ ἰσραὴλ ἐνετείλατο ὁ βασιλεὺς δὲ αἶρῃσι λίθους μεγάλους τιμίς εἰς τὸν θεμέλιον τοῦ οἴκου καὶ λίθους ἀπελεκήτους καὶ ἐπελέκησαν οἱ υἱοὶ Σολομωντος, δὲ οἱ υἱοὶ χειρᾶμ καὶ ἔβαλον αὐτὰς ἐν τῷ τετάρτῳ ἔτει, δὲ ἐθεμελιώσαν τον οἶκον Κυρίου ἐν μηνὶ νείσαν καὶ τῷ δευτέρῳ μηνὶ ἐνδεκάτῳ ἐνιαυτῷ, μηνὶ βααλ ὃς ἦν μὴν ὄγδοος συνέτελέσθη ὁ οἶκος εἰς πάντα λόγον αὐτοῦ, καὶ εἰς πᾶσαν δῆὰ ταξίν αὐτῆς.

Quomodo quadraginta & sex annis exstructum fuisse Judæi dicant templum hoc, si historiam sequamur, dicere non possumus. Nam in tertio regum scriptum est, quod præparaverint lapides & ligna tribus annis. In quarto autem anno, mense secundo, regnante rege Solomone super Israel, mandavit Rex, & tollunt lapides grandes

σαλωμων ἐπὶ τὸν ἰσραηλ (α) καὶ ἐνετείλατο ὁ βασιλεὺς ἵνα αἶρῃσι λίθους μεγάλους τιμίς εἰς τὸν θεμέλιον τῷ οἴκῳ καὶ λίθους ἀπελεκήτους. Καὶ ἐπελέκησαν οἱ υἱοὶ σαλωμων καὶ οἱ υἱοὶ χειρᾶμ καὶ ἔβαλον αὐτοὺς. Ἐν τῷ ἔτει τῷ τετάρτῳ ἐθεμελιώσε τον οἶκον κυρία ἐν μηνὶ ξίς καὶ τῷ δευτέρῳ μηνὶ ἐν ἐνδεκάτῳ ἐνιαυτῷ ἐν μηνὶ βααλ τετος ὁ μὴν ὁ ὄγδοος συνέτελέσθη ὁ οἶκος εἰς πάντα λόγον αὐτῆς, καὶ εἰς πᾶσαν διάταξιν αὐτοῦ.

(a) *Alius liber non habet illud καί.*

Et factum est in a quadragessimo & quadragintessimo anno, exitus filiorum Israel de Ægypto, anno quarto mense secundo regnante rege Solomon, super Israel & mandavit rex, ut tollant lapides magnos preciosos, in fundamentum domus & lapides

grandes lapides pretiosos pro fundamento domus: atque lapides impolitos & sculpserunt eos, filii Solomonis, & filii Hiram, jecerunt eos pro fundatione in quarto anno & fundaverunt domum Domini in mense Nisan (is est secundus mensis,) Undecimo autem anno in mense Baal qui est mensis octavus perfecta est domus per omnes partes suas, & juxta cunctam dispositionem suam. Ut ergo etiam præparationem ejus cum tempore structuræ annumeremus, undecim annorum numerus non completur ad structuram templi. Quamobrem quomodo Judæi dicunt quadraginta & sex annis ædificatum fuisse templum hoc? Nisi forte quis qui urgeretur contenderet ostendere

pides (b) non dolatos. Et dolaverunt filii Salomon & filii Chiram, & fecerunt eos. In (c) anno quarto fundavit domum Domini in mense Ziu (d) et secundo mense. In undecimo anno in mense Baal (hic est octavus mensis) consummata est domus in omni ratione ejus, & in omni constitutione ejus."

NOBILIUS.

(a) Quadragessimo) Comp. ὀγδοηκὸς ᾧ octogessimo ut in Vulg. (b) Non dolatos] ἀπελεκτήτος, sic etiam Theodoretus q. 22. ubi hunc locum tractat. In Comp. in extremo superiore capite ubi hæc habet, sic legitur καὶ λίθους πελεκητὺς καὶ ἐπελέκησαν οἱ σολομῶντος θεοὶ θελοὶ χειρᾶν, δε οἱ γιβλίοι δε ἡτοίμασαν, & lapides

ostendere tempus quadraginta & sex annorum compleri ab eo tempore quo David inquit ad Nathan prophetam consulens de ædificationem templi: “an ego habito in domo cedrina & arca Dei manet in medio tentorio? *and a little after*, he says, Quaresi poterit quis ostendere principium præparationis templi fuisse colligente eo materiam convenientem a tempore quinti anni regni sui poterit, si urgeatur de quadraginta sex annis.

lapides dolatos & dolaverunt servi Salomonis & servi chinem & Gibbii, &c. In anno quarto] Hæc usque ad illud “& domus’ in Comp. leguntur” in extremo hoc capite ut in Vulgata.

I have compared this with the edition of the complut. Greek, Latin, Hebrew, and Chaldaic of Plantin, Ant. 1571. by Permission of Philip II. and I find it correct.

I might, were it necessary here, also remark, that it is rather an unfortunate argument and quotation against the authority of the contested reading, to produce the passage of an author, who evidently mistook the subject on which he is writing, and confounded the second temple with the first,
in

* He, indeed, mentions the temple of Esdras, as supposed by some to be meant, but rejects it, *since the history of the Maccabees is so uncertain !!!*

in a manner so singularly absurd and incomprehensible, that it detracts very much from the character for learning and research, usually attributed to Origen. Independent of which, the translation of the verse (John 2. 20.) is generally acknowledged to be inaccurate, and that it means "46 years has it been *in building*, and *yet* it is not finished," which should have of itself explained the weakness of his reasoning, and the futility of his parade of objection and solution;—but I trust the argument is now fully disposed of.*

7. The last argument of the learned author, is equally singular and indefensible as those on which we have already animadverted :—that, "*because* the earlier chronologists do not *expressly* quote the controverted passage, or adopt it as the base of their several hypotheses, *therefore* it must be interpolated," would be a species of argument rather equivocal and inconsequent, even if we could not, as we have done, assign the causes of this *apparent* neglect, viz. that they esteemed the period of 480 years to include and refer merely to the prosperous and peaceful ages of the Jewish confederacy, and *intentionally* to omit the interval of foreign domination,

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and

* Vide also Joseph. Ant. lib. 15. c. 14. where speaking of the Temple, built or enlarged by Herod in the eighteenth year of his reign, he adds, "we have continued to increase and embellish it, even till the reign of Nero." The *Polyglott* Version of the Septuagint by Walton, (and I believe, the Sixtine also, to which it is usually conformable) omits the very difficult and obscure passage, (1. S. 13. 1.) and begins with the second verse, "And he chose, &c." Is this, I would ask, an argument against the authenticity of *that* passage? I leave it to the reader to make the application.

and national misfortune. We have seen before, that Josephus acknowledged an interval to be delivered in the text, and that consequently, “ the interpolation was *not* made a little before the time of Eusebius;” but what will the learned author say, when he hears that the bishop of Cæsarea, Eusebius himself, the author of the monstrous heresy of supporting the authenticity of the text, had for a long time consented to neglect the authority of the contested verse, and to understand it as his predecessors had done, not as representing the true and correct interval, but as recording the period flattering to the national pride, and willingly remembered by its vanity. Eusebius reckoned 600 years, including the servitudes and anarchies, as the true interval from the exod, (Syncellus ut supra p. 175) and this even while he acknowledged the existence and authenticity of text, under the limitations of his interpretation: nay more, in his Præp. Evan. (Lib. x. c. 14.) he accounts all the Judges and the Servitudes as exclusively consecutive; and even makes the 20 years of Sampson *commence after the conclusion** of the Philistine

* I know that it has been attempted by some, to alledge *this* as a retraction of his first principles, in adhering to the fidelity of the text; because, say they, “ his Præp. Evan. was written *after* his chronology,” (Vide Vig. &c.) but it is not; for it is plain by the passage of Syncellus to which I have referred, that he was equally aware of the objections to the verse at the time he wrote his chronological work, and that it was the arguments Syncellus afterwards quotes from him, determined his opinion to abide by the strict interval

Philistine oppression, contrary to the sense, the spirit, and very expression of Scripture, (Jud. c. 13. 14 and 15.) and consequently he cannot justly be accused of an undue partiality for the authenticity of the passage; or a weak bias to the supposed traditional interpretation of the Jews—he has even in the two preceding chapters, quoted with applause, the chronological systems of Josephus and Clemens of Alexandria, who we know, on grounds apparently similar, neglected the authority of the book of kings.

Besides, it is plain that Eusebius was, in chronology, the strict disciple of Africanus, who wrote in the beginning of the second century, and that he found himself constrained to desert the opinion of his master, in this epoch, on grounds that he held to be irrefragable. From this, it is evident, that the contested passage was known to, and acknowledged by Africanus, since Syncellus, *his* zealous follower, and the continual adversary of Eusebius, on every question of the Hebrew chronology, defending the system of Africanus and his own in neglecting the authority of this verse, pleads “that it excludes the servitudes and oppressions,” “that it is inconsistent with the supputation of St. Paul,” so much relied upon in a later age, and “that it is deserted by other
chronologists

interval of the text: besides, it is evident, that in the *Præp. Evang.* he is only delivering a summary of the Hebrew records from the sacred books, without exercising the criticism of enquiry, or the salutary philosophy of doubt. The passage of Syncellus has been quite overlooked by those who wish to consider Eusebius as a proselyte.

chronologists—with Africanus before him, and intending particularly to support his principles and hypothesis, he does not even allude to the supposed interpolation of text; nay, he is even, it should seem, speaking the very language by which Africanus excused *his* neglect of the *literal* precision of the text.* The whole of the passage in which Syncellus records the reasoning of Eusebius and his own computation, is worthy of perusal, and I think will satisfy any reader, that the reasoning of the learned author, on the silence of the earlier chronologists, is fallacious and unfounded. I shall only quote a part of it;—"If," says Syncellus, "to the 450 years of Paul, you add the 40 in the wilderness, 27 of Joshua, 18 of the Elders, *twenty* Heli, 20 Samuel, 40 Saul, 40 of David, and the four of Solomon, we will have 659 years from the exod to the foundation of the temple, according to Eusebius 600, to Africanus 740. But, says Eusebius, none of these numbers will accord with the generations, nine from Abraham to Moses in 470 years, and 5 from Naasson to David in above 600? and besides, 6 priests from Eleazar to Samuel, thus Aaron, Eleazar, Phinehas, then Abiud, Mochtei, Ozi, Heli

* Syncellus before had remarked, that Jephthah reckoned only 300 years to his time, "excluding," says he, "the servitude which is to be observed, and the error of Eusebius, who reckons the years of the judges and servitudes together, (connuserantio Eusebii Gr. συναριθμῶν) to be avoided." This is another proof of the reason alledged, why the earlier chronologists *appear* to neglect the text. 1. Kings. 6. 1. Syn, ut supra p. 164.

Heli, Ahitub ; from hence it is evident, that the *one hundred and twenty years* of servitude are to be subducted, in order that the series of the generations and the interval may agree." This latter argument appeared so forcible to Syncellus, that he endeavours to invalidate it. (p. 182.) "Sadoc," says he, is reckoned the eighth high-priest after Aaron, by Eusebius, but to the more correct computation, he is to be placed in the eleventh generation, (*sede undecima reperitur*) in this manner—Aaron, Eleazar, Phinehas, Abiud, Bocha, Ozi, Heli, Ahitub, Samuel, Abiathar, Zadoc." On this solution, I shall only observe, that Eusebius is conformable to Josephus (*An. lib. 5. 12.*) in his catalogue, and refer the reader to Spencerus de *successione Pontif.* who will amply prove to him against Syncellus, that Samuel never was or could have been high-priest, if indeed, it was not sufficiently evident from Scripture, which represents Ahimelech, (Ahitub,) and his son as discharging the duties of that office, *during* the prophet's life ; of course, the answer attempted by Syncellus falls to the ground. It is to be observed, he has not attempted to reply to the argument adduced from the succession in the house of David, the compendious and summary mode invented by the learned author, and which does equal credit to his sagacity and invention,

* I may here observe, that some chronologists lessen the difficulty, by supposing Obed and Jesse had their children at a much *later* age than their predecessors. Vide Wall's critical notes on the genealogy of David, in the book of Ruth: this would increase the numbers mentioned in the former note considerably.

vention, viz. “that some are omitted,” doubtless not having suggested itself to his understanding, nor perhaps suiting the unphilosophic genius of his age: but a consideration of the persons who must have been deceived in order to give colour to the charge of interpolation, will the more easily expose its absurdity. Is it to be supposed that St. Jerome, to whom we are indebted for the Latin translation of Eusebius, which is to us the original, and who had collated and compared such a vast variety of exemplars of the Hebrew, and the versions, in order to compile the vulgate edition of the Scriptures, which for so many ages was the only copy known to the western world—who has remarked so many various readings, more particularly in the numerical passages of the sacred records—who has examined and discussed so many questions on the Hebrew antiquities, in works it should seem particularly adapted to this purpose—(his epistles, prefaces, and *Quæst. Hebraicæ**)—whose learning was so vast, research so unbounded, and opportunities of informing himself so numerous

* The author of this work is certainly doubtful, and the learned Benedictines do not scruple to deny, that it was written by St. Jerome; but it has been found among his writings, from a very early age, and the argument which they produce against its authority, though worthy the zeal of the editors, will not be admitted as conclusive by the cold judgment of the critic; for although it does not manifest the extensive erudition of his other works, and particularly of his commentary on Genesis, yet it may have been one of his *first* exercises in sacred criticism; and perhaps the commentary on Genesis, was only an enlarged and corrected edition of his earlier and more unfinished essays.

rous—whose whole life was, at it were, dedicated and devoted to the pursuit of Biblical criticism, and the elucidation of the difficulties that might present themselves to the student: is it not extraordinary that such a man should be deceived—should never have remarked this passage as doubtful or supposititious—should have overlooked the deceitful exposition of the Jews—and should have neglected to reprehend, or to animadvert, upon the adherence of Eusebius to a reading, which he must or ought to have known was spurious and false. In the age of MSS. we know what care and attention was employed, to preserve the earlier and more approved copies of the Scriptures; and is it to be supposed, that Jerome, living for so many years in the *very centre of the Holy-land, in the principal resort of the whole Christian world, and distinguished as the seat of the cœnobitical institutions of the East, from the apostolic ages, and where of course, many of the oldest copies and versions would have been preserved — could have remained ignorant that the verse, or the interval, was not in the most ancient MS. or was falsely interpreted by the Jewish commentators? We have found it so very easy, to detect the infidelities of the Jews in every other point, where they have attempted by wresting the sense, or falsifying the chronology of Scripture, to elude the application of the prophecies to our Saviour,

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that

* At Bethlehem, where he died, aged 90, an. 422, in the reign of Theodosius.

that it is scarcely to be expected, that *this*, alone, should have escaped the exertions of interested research, exercised ingenuity, active zeal, and unsubdued industry;— that it should have crept into *all* the versions and MSS. and paraphrases—that the Greek and the Latin churches, the Oriental and the Western Christians, otherwise, the most remote and discordant in their rituals and sentiments, in their dogmas and their traditions, in their epochs and their chronology, should be uniform and concordant in that alone—that in the third century, the reading should have been so ancient, or so extended, as to escape the researches of Eusebius and St. Jerome; and in the first, should seem to have been acknowledged and paraphrased by Africanus; and *yet* that it is a spurious interpolation, founded on traditional hypothesis, and introduced not long before that period; is, surely, irreconcilable to any known principles of criticism and investigation;—perhaps I should not go too far in stating, that there is not in the Scriptural records, any passage of *merely* chronological importance, the authenticity of which is so clear and well established. But when in addition to all this, we find that the present reading of the Septuagint (440) is as old as Eusebius, and probably as Origen; and when we recollect, that Eusebius himself, after delivering his objections against reckoning the judges and servitudes exclusively successive; remarks, “*and therefore the reading of the

1 Kings

* I paraphrase his language from memory, but his *meaning* is preserved; he prefers the Hebrew reading, and adopts it in his Chronicon.

1. Kings 6. 1. 480 years, *or that* of the Septuagint, is to be followed," (Apud Syn. ut supra) surely, we will agree, that there seems as little of the prevention of system, or the partialities of hypothesis, in the opinion he has delivered, as in that of any known author. It has been said, indeed, that the tradition of the Jews he professes to follow is his own, or noticed only by him, and of course, rests only on his authority ; but we have seen it has received the countenance of the great Hebraist, St. Jerome, and is to be met with in the *Fasti Siculi*, or the *Chronicon Paschale*, the author of which, as he *certainly* differs in his system, does not, I believe, *once* mention Eusebius, or allude to his authority ; a fact which seems to have been overlooked, when the traditional interpretation of the Jews is represented, as resting on *his* single testimony.

After considering so much at length, the arguments of the learned author, it only remains that I recal to the reader's attention, the support and defence, which some of the items of the calculus we support, have received from his authority ; in admitting that the servitudes of the Ammonites and of the Philistines, should be considered as flowing on contemporaneously with the times of the judges corresponding to them ; and so thankful do I feel myself, that he has thrown the mantle of his character and his learning over *those points*, that I reject without dissatisfaction, the invidious task of re-

presenting how inconsistent his admission is, with the principles he has laid down, or with the severe animadversions he has passed on the judgment and hypothesis of the bishop of Cæsarea;—In the same spirit, I shall refrain from observing on the period (2 years) he allots to the government of the Elders, and the interval between the death of Joshua and the first servitude; or its consistency with the tenor of Scripture, or the conclusions of analogy and reason—supposing that the remarks already submitted on this period, in answer to the hypothesis of other Chronologists, will apply equally to this, and be of themselves sufficient to invalidate the reasoning of the learned author.

VI. The system of Josephus is almost the only one that remains to be discussed, but I shall dismiss it in a few words, as being generally inconsistent with himself, with Scripture, and with collateral testimony; as being liable, and exposed to all the remarks we have urged against other authors; from his placing the commencement of the servitudes, in the very year of the death of the preceding judge—from *his* misconception of the different import of the terms “repose” and “jurisdiction”—from the inconsistently short period he has allotted to Samuel; (only 12 years) from the difficulty, or almost impossibility, of making his several items coincide with the aggregates he assigns, it being evident that, as he intends to transcribe Scripture, his separate intervals are of course, to be reconciled with himself, and with it, as the
passages

passages of Judges are to be reconciled with the computation of the first book of Kings : but the very passage in which he assigns the interval from the exod to the foundation of the temple, is important, as affording us some argument for our system and supposition: the passage states, the foundation of the temple, was laid “ in the fourth year of Solomon, the second month, which the Macedonians call Artemisium, the Hebrews Jar, in the 592d year, after the Israelites departed out of Egypt; 1022 years after the vocation of Abraham; 1440 after the deluge; and 3102d year of the world.” The surplus is 112 years above that in the book of Kings, which is properly supplied by the servitudes, amounting *exclusively* to 111 years, so that it was in the second month, or beginning of the 112th year.

If we subduct the 592 from 1022, the difference is 430 years, from the vocation of Abraham to the exod, as assigned in Scripture, and in Josephus himself before. (Antiq. 2. C. 6.) So that it should seem that the number 592, was intended by the historian; but if we subduct 1022 from 1440, the difference, 418, is the interval from the deluge to the vocation of Abraham; a number not agreeing with either Scripture or Josephus, whether we consider his separate items, or his aggregates: (Ant. 1. 7.) the latter of which is conformable to the Hebrew, (292 years,) whereas again subducting the 1022 from the years of the world, 3102, there remains 2080, nearly, according (within three years) to the Hebrew. Again, if we subduct,

1440 from

1440 from 3102, the difference, 2662, is the epoch of the deluge, and this epoch, although not differing from both the Septuagint and the Hebrew, is only 6 years above his own computation, (1. Ant. C. 4.) 2656. The month Jar is not agreeable to the Hebrew, the Septuagint, or any of the versions, which read Zif.*

It appears therefore from the consideration of this passage alone, that Josephus is consistent neither with himself, nor with Scripture, and that where only he is consistent with himself, (in reading 592 years) he supports the principles of our interpretation, and the fidelity of the text, since it only exceeds the assigned number 480, by the years of the Servitudes, which he has reckoned exclusively; and that the different suppositions of the learned to correct his chronology, do more violence to the fidelity of his versions, than those of any other author ever suffered, since they are compelled to expunge several whole passages, periods, and epochs, scattered through his works, and the more they make him deviate from Scripture, the less they make him consistent with reason, or with himself: that their systems are at best, but approximations, and so unsupported by the readings of the MS. that they ought never to be proposed as authorities for correcting the sacred writings. This is particularly applicable

* This objection, I admit, is merely verbal, as it is the same month as Zif. Vide auctores citatos in Synopsi Criticorum.

cable to the readings of Vignoles, who defends 648 as the number of Josephus; or that of Hales, his last corrector, who finds equal authority for 622. Again, (Ant. 9. 14.) Josephus states the captivity of the 10 tribes, was 947 years after the exod, and 200 after the jurisdiction of Joshua, as if Joshua ended his administration 147 years after the exod. Supposing we correct the former numbers to 807,* and understand it to mean, "*after* the beginning of Joshua, in the 40th year of the exod," we shall derive the same interval; for the 240 he assigns from the end of Solomon to this captivity, being subducted, leaves 667 years, as the interval between Joshua and Rehoboam; taking away the 36 of Solomon, 631 remain from beginning of Joshua, and 591 from the exod to the fourth year of Solomon: subduct, then, 111 years of the servitudes, and 480 remain as before.

Again, he reckons (Ant. 7. 3.) 515 years from the division of the land, to the taking of Jerusalem by David, add 19 of Joshua, 40 of Moses, the sum is 574, which with the 33 of David and 4 of Solomon, make 611 or 12, which in another place he assigns as the interval from the exod, to the foundation of the temple, the 20 years surplus being perhaps the
time

* Whiston would correct the reading to 907, inaccurately, as is evident from the account above, which alone, makes the system of Josephus inconsistent.

† The remainder of the 25 he assigns to Joshua, the division having taken place in the 6th year.

time the ark remained in Kirjathjearim. Here then are three different systems, but subduct this twenty, with the 112 of servitudes, and there remains 480, as before.

He tells us, that Samuel died, at the period assigned in Scripture, during the persecution of David, by Saul. (Lib. 6. 14.) after "ruling the people 12 years after the death of Eli, and then 18 in conjunction with Saul;" and he repeats, C. xv. "Saul reigned 18 in the life of Samuel, and 20 after his death. I have already exposed the absurdity of this, when examining the reign of Saul, but I may add here, this does not admit an Interregnum after Eli, it supposes he immediately succeeded him, agreeably to our system, and contrary to that of Vignoles.

He acknowledges the account of Jephthah, computing 300 years from the conquest of the Ammorites to his time, as in Scripture, which is, however, directly at variance with his hypothesis, in reckoning the servitudes successively. (Ant. 5. 9.)

He reckons the jurisdiction of Sampson for 20 years, as *succeeding* the 40 years oppression of the Philistines, contrary to the spirit and expression, both of his own proper narrative, and of the testimony of Scripture. (Ant. 5. 10. It should appear therefore, that the various corruptions which meet in the chronology of Josephus, the inconsistency between his separate items and the aggregates he assigns, the incompatible epochs he frequently delivers, and the different
supputations

supputations he appears in several instances to follow and support, must be attributed to the *intentional* errors of the transcribers, many of whom, might be willing to correct the copies they preserved, by the reading they judged most conformable to Scripture. As the Septuagint was principally in use, perhaps the ancient fathers had corrected his earlier epochs by its authority, and as the passage under review was understood both in the Septuagint and Hebrew, to be an exclusive interval of peace, without referring to the servitudes, they amended his reading by adding the servitudes, and made up the number we now read. We know that the Grecian fathers attached considerable consequence to impressing the Jewish traditions into the service of religion, and as *they* had declared, the Messiah was to appear in the fifth millenary; the chronology of the Septuagint, as most accordant to this, was most agreeable to them; in this period, from the exod, finding the numbers in the book of Kings, incompatible with those in the Judges, they paraphrased it in the manner we have particularised — and many of them who had engaged in controversies with the heathen philosophers, were anxious to establish the antiquity of the Hebrew books and writers, above any period to which Grecian literature could ascend. This idea, made them too often adopt calculations of rather dubious authenticity, and the interpretation in general, most willingly received, would be that more favourable to the antiquity of the Jewish æconomy

and dispensation. To this we must attribute the general disposition of the earlier writers, to antedate the æra of Moses, and make him contemporary with the Grecian Inachus; a position, however, which it appears clearly from his books against Apion, was not professed or defended by Josephus, who, although anxious for the reputation of his people, is more modest in his pretensions. This supposition of the intentional corruptions, or emendations of Josephus, will receive additional authority, when we consider that the generality of his manuscripts appear to have been almost separately corrected; those of the Latin translator were accommodated more nearly to the sentiments of the Latin church, and many of the original Greek have chronological annotations and summaries to the books and chapters, not reconcileable to the principles of the historian, as they now stand; but evidently marked from the opinions and supputation of the possessor, and which, of course, were adjusted and accommodated to the hypothesis of his church; but the opinion of St. Paul, (granting an enlarged interval to the judges,) was particularly insisted on by the Greek chronologists, and afforded them a strong argument for their computation, and paraphrase of the text. Syncellus concludes his review of the reasoning on this subject, by saying, that he is resolved to adhere to “the *evangelic* calculus;” a term sufficiently indicating both his sense of the authority of the text, and the spirit in which he rejects it.

The

The reading of many of the Septuagint versions, may, perhaps, be reconciled on a similar supposition of *intentional* correction. Observing that they granted but 20 years to Eli, and omitted the ten, attributed to Elon, and perhaps differed in some other points from the Hebrew; the correctors and transcribers thought they ought to be amended in the aggregate also, and therefore reduced the 480 of the Hebrew to 440. But after the Hebrew calculus came into repute, from the collation of the Scriptures and the more general study of the original language, in the time of Constantine, the Greek MSS. were altered to conform to it, and the years of Elon were *generally* restored, and in the Complutensian collation, the Hebrew reading of 480. Nicephorus grants only 20 years to the Philistine oppression, 3 to Elon, and 20 to Eli; so that he subducts 47 years from the Hebrew, but the MS. he used granted perhaps 440, as the round number, more according with the generality of chronologic periods in Scripture.

It may be here casually remarked, that the items of Nicephorus do not accord with his summation, in computing "630 years from the exod to David;" (p. 396, edit. ut supra) as from the exod to the foundation of the temple, *they* amount only to 563 years, including the years of the third servitude, which have been omitted by mistake. What reliance is then to be placed on such authorities, against the undeviating accuracy of the Hebrew records?*

2 H 2

It

* This accuracy is observable, even in the terms used to introduce the mention of the servitudes

It only now remains, that we consider the celebrated text, Acts 13. 19. 20. affording the supputation of St. Paul, which is usually alledged against the authenticity of the contested text, and insisted on by every advocate of the enlarged interval.

1st. On this I would remark, St. Paul either designed to exclude the years of servitudes from the period he assigns to the Judges, or he did not. In the former case, he must have computed the numbers afforded to us by the Book of Judges, separately, and in succession; which would have given him, from the conquest to the death of Samuel, above 500 years, (which Josephus, who reckons all the numbers consecutively, has noticed as the true interval,) a number which is certainly better adapted either to determine the true and exact interval, if that was St. Paul's object, agreeably to the first alternative, or for the purposes of an orator, who usually assigns rather a round and approximating period, than a precise and chronologic one. So that it clearly follows, that St. Paul, if he
meant

servitudes, and seem to have a particular reference to the nature of these latter: thus, in some instances, "the Lord sold the children of Israel," seems to denote the servitude to have been only of tribute, whereas "the Lord *delivered* them into the hands of their enemies" more properly indicates a greater severity of subjection, and the circumstances of the oppressions recorded, appear at least, in some instances, to justify this, perhaps hypercritical remark, (Collate Judges 3. 8. 12,) in which the term "strengthened" is particularly apposite, when contrasted with the small success of the king of Moab, (noticed above) chap. 4. 2, 6. 1. 10. 8. 13. 1. on 6. 6. 1. we have also observed before.

meant to reckon the periods in succession, either adopted a mean in his calculations unknown to us, or that the number assigned to him is incorrect.

But, if he designed to include the years of servitude in those allotted to the Judges, agreeably to the second alternative, no ingenuity (except that of Pezron and Vossius, who have invented anarchies and interregnums at will,) can deduce such a number from the Book of Judges. It will not amount to more than 340 or 350 as will be clear to any, commencing from the sixth year of Joshua, or the division of the land, and reckoning the numbers assigned to the Judges, until Samuel, separately from the servitudes.

2dly. If St. Paul reckons, according to the first alternative, in succession, his computation will militate with that of Jephthah; for, he would reckon, (as Josephus does,) near 400 years from the fortieth year after the exod, to the time of Jephthah, when Scripture expressly mentions 300 years only to have intervened.

3dly. This calculus enlarges the period allotted to a generation, beyond the natural limits, and, therefore, cannot be admitted.

4th. On these grounds, then, I must admit the correction of the manuscript produced by Beza, which reads 350, *εταρκα* *τετρακκοσις*, and which admirably agrees with my system, and with the remarks I have already made. Nor are we to reject it because it is authorized only by one or two MSS.—The student

student will remember several instances, where the production and evidence of a single or even mutilated MS. has elucidated passages that appeared, otherwise, absolutely irrelevant or contradictory. The numbers in the Books of Kings and Chronicles are evident and numerous instances of this. (Vide Bochart, and many others.) A single MS. has explained a passage in the history of the deluge, which perfectly reconciles all the difficulties that have been alledged on the duration and period of that awful year. I know that critical ingenuity may, and has endeavoured to destroy the force and evidence of this passage, on the grounds that the introduction of the enclitick particle, *τε*, is inconsistent with the genius of the original, “quid non potuit,” &c. But, independent of the answers that might be adduced from the Hebraistic and Syriac idioms and constructions, equally inconsistent with the purity of the text, with which the New Testament abounds, we have the MSS. which afforded Usher and Marsham reason to suppose this period referred to the interval between the promise and the birth of Isaac, and which equally solve the difficulty.*

But

* The passage, as quoted by Mrsham, is as follows: (p. 309) Κατέκληροδοτησεν την γην αυτων ὡς εἰσι τετρακοσίοις πεντηκοντα και μετα ταυτα ἔδωκε κριτας. Ita edidit. R. Stephanus, ita habet codex vetustissimus in Bibliothecâ regia, ita vertit *Vulgata*, “Sorte distribuit eis terram eorum quasi post 450 annos: & post hæc dedit Judices. Usher p. 67. Chronologia Sacra ad finem Annalium Editione Barlow, Bremæ, 1686. se scriptum invenisse Johannes Mariana pro editione vulgata. Κατέκληροδοτησεν αυτοῖς την γην αὐτων ὡς ἰ μετα', τετρακοσίων καὶ πεντηκοντα ἔτη και μετα ταυτα ἔδωκε κριτας.

The

But, assuming the numbers to be correct, if we examine more particularly into the supputation of St. Paul, we shall find that, from the conquest of the land to the government of Samuel, being, according to him, 450 years, he affords us a strong argument for some of the principal items in our calculus. For, if we reckon the years of the Judges, and servitudes, consecutively, as we meet them in the Books of Judges and Samuel, we shall collect *exactly** 450 years, from the first year

The Alex. exemplar. in England, reads,

Κατεκληρονόμησεν αὐτοῖς τὴν γῆν αὐτῶν ὥς ἔτεσι μετὰ τετρακοσίοις καὶ πεντήκοντα καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα ἔδωκεν κρίτας. Quod ipsum quoque inter diversas illas lectiones repertur quas Novo test. Parisius an. 1568 Græcè a sè excuso Robertus Stephanus subjiciendas curavit; consentiente quoque codice quodam Græco, alio Parisiis item edito & à Beza in annotationibus ad hunc locum producto; et Novi collegii apud Oxonienses exemplari manuscripto altero, nisi quòd hoc, absit pronomen αὐτῶν potest γῆν, in illo, addatur αὐτοῖς post verbum ἔδωκε. Usher, p. 67.

The edition of the New Testament, by Gregorius, has in the notes, the correction of other manuscripts, thus—

ὥς μετὰ τετρακοσία καὶ πεντήκοντα ἔτη & connectit cum versu sup: Sic N*. 2 & W†. inde sequuntur καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα ἔδωκε κρίτας.

* MSS. Collegii Nov. Oxon. Wechelii sive Junii.

Carcellæus Amst. 1658. Elzevir reads the same, but from perhaps similar sources.

Maximus Calliopolites, in his Testament, which is published in two columns, collating different versions, one of which he denominates Νεον reads in the Νεον —

ἕως τετρακοσίων πενήντα. With this last word I am not acquainted. In Coll. Dub.

* This affords us a very strong argument for the correction of the text; the numbers in the book of Judges, amount *exactly* to the period assigned by the apostle; why then should he use a dubious and qualifying term, ὥς, quasi, or as our English Translation has it, “by about?” &c. Surely, it was improper, if he meant to adhere to the *literal* fidelity of the text, but it was natural, obvious, and correct, if the amendment of Beza is admitted, for the interval was really “about 350 years.”

year of the servitude under Chusan, to the last of Eli, or commencement of Samuel. It is, hence, plain, that St. Paul (assuming the disputed text to be correct,) must have reckoned *some* of the periods assigned to the Judges and servitudes reciprocally inclusive;* which affords strong evidence for our more consistent interpretation, in computing them *all* in this manner. But while he thus makes clearly for the principles of our computation, he is decidedly adverse to the sentiments of those who would adduce him in support of their hypothesis for extending the period; since, 1st. supposing that it is the period assigned to the government of Samson, he means to compute inclusively, (as that period is expressly ascribed by Scripture to be contemporary with the dominion of the Philistines); the setwenty years must be the duration he would allot to the government of the elders, or the interval from the conquest to the first servitude under Chusan. But, on what principle, then, can Vossius, Pezron, and the other adherents of the enlarged calculus, quote the passage of the Apostle as their authority for granting fifty years, or more, to the elders, and for afterwards attributing forty years complete to the jurisdiction of Othniel, forgetting that he was himself one of the elders, whose government had concluded, as they alledge,

* Since he computes, from *the conquest of the land* to the end of Samuel, only 450 years—and he cannot be supposed to mean, contrary to history, reason, Scripture, and common sense, that the first servitude commenced *immediately* after the conquest.

alledge, before his victory? But, 2dly. this is not the only argument deducible from the authority of St. Paul, against the principles we combat. It is decisive against the opinion of those who would suppose an anarchy to succeed every jurisdiction; and this affords all the requisite evidence in favour of our arguments, that Samuel succeeded Eli, without an interregnum intervening; since, as he evidently computes less, than the numbers in the Book of Judges*, (which acknowledges no suspension of the government,) would authorize, he cannot be produced as authority, for admitting any intervening anarchies, to prolong the interval. These arguments are decisive against the more daring innovators who would boldly reject the text, and arrange the periods according to their systems and caprice. But the more cautious supporters of chronologic heresy, who, would acknowledge the authenticity of the 1st Kings, 6. 1. while they dexterously evade its authority, by forced glosses and strained interpretations, are equally convicted of inconsistency and error by the calculus of the Apostle. Petavius, who adduces his authority for computing 520 years from the exod to the foundation of the temple, alledging, as we have before remarked, that the term, "exod," is to be taken in the latitude of 40 years, so that the 480 years are to be computed from the entrance into

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2 I

Canaan

* This also is the opinion of the Rabbins. Vide Abrabanel ad 13 Saml, v. 1. apud Usher Chron. Sacra. p. 68.

Canaan, is eminently subject to this censure. His system is clearly either erroneous, or, at least, inconsistent with his authorities, in its principles, for, if to the 450 years of St. Paul, from the conquest to Samuel, we add the 40 years of Saul and Samuel, and the 40 of David, we have 530 years, which sum, with the 40 in the desert and the 24 Petavius himself allots to Joshua and the elders, completes the aggregate of 594 years, and with the four first of Solomon, 598; a number sufficiently removed from that he would compute on the authority of St. Paul. Whether, then, we reject the numbers of the Apostle, as falsified by the copyists, and substitute, with the exemplar of Beza, 350 years; or whether, with Usher, we distinguish the points of the text, and suppose the period assigned is from the birth of Isaac to the conquest of the land; or, whether, in fine, we consider the Apostle on his own principle of "being all things to all men, that he might gain some," merely stating the computation he knew to be familiar to his auditory, and not his own. In whatever aspect, or point of view, we behold this celebrated text, we shall find, that it by no means authorizes the calculus of our adversaries—that they reject its computation, while they quote its authority, and seem satisfied to force the expressions of the Apostle to countenance and support their dissent from the acknowledged evidence of Scripture, in order afterwards, to extend the principle of rejection even against the alledged advocate of their heresy.

In

In a word, we have seen all the Eastern versions, unanimously concurring in the reading of the Vulgate, the Septuagint differing in some editions, but only to *diminish* the contested interval; the Chronicon Paschale reckoning the years of the first servitude, *inclusively* in the period of the first jurisdiction, “according to the tradition of the Jews;” Eusebius asserting that he acted upon the same principles, and the same authority, and the testimony of each, equally independent and unimpeachable. Josephus, himself, according (where alone he is consistent) with the computation of the text—the series of the priests, of the generations, and of the judges, agreeing to support it; the various collateral circumstances which tend to establish and confirm its authenticity; the inconsistencies and absurdities of the contrary hypotheses; the antiquity of the reading, long before the Jews could have ever thought of abridging the times, in order to elude the chronologic proofs of the Messiah,* (as is evident from the concordance of the Septuagint) the weakness of the only argument produced against it, in supposing “that the servitudes were intentionally excluded,” when we have the *direct testimony* of Eusebius and the Chronicon Paschale

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that

* They appear to have began this in the time Rabbi Akiba (contemporary with Adrian) when it was forbidden by the Sanhedrim, to calculate the period of the Messiah.

that the Hebrew Rabbins, expressly included them in the several corresponding administrations;* the Chronicon speaking to a particular instance, that of Othniel, Scripture mentioning another, that of Sampson;† and Eusebius generalizing the principle to the rest; all thus, bearing on the same point, and tending in harmonious consistency to the same object; and shall we then hesitate to affirm and declare, that the authenticity

* Besides, it is the peculiar genius and character of the sacred writers, to use terms, in an *exclusive* sense, when the circumstances of the history and narration, evidently demonstrate, that an *inclusive* meaning is conveyed; thus, the phrase “the sojourn of the Children of Israel, in the land of Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years,” which so frequently occurs, we know, is to be understood very differently from the idea, which the *precise* import of the terms, would seem to indicate, for it includes the whole period elapsed from the *promise* to the *Exod*, and the *real* “sojourn” of the Israelites was only half the assigned one; as is evident even from the authority of St. Paul, which has been so much relied on, in the discussion of the period more immediately the subject of this Essay. Vide Epis. to Galat. Genebrard and some Jesuits overlooked the testimony of the Apostle, and contended that the Israelites remained 430 years *complete* in Egypt, contrary to every chronological authority, and every Scriptural inference.

† The question has been asked, why “Scripture should only have mentioned the years of *one* of the Judges, as contemporaneous to the corresponding servitude?” but the answer is obvious and easy; first, it is false, for as we have seen, it records a similar instance in the case of Jair; secondly, were it even true, the reason can be assigned which clearly gives additional weight to our system—it was, because the case was singular, as instead of *including*, (like other instances) his years were *included* in the servitude of the Philistines; because he was born at the *commencement* of their oppression and because it was intended as a commentary on the prophecy which preceded his birth, “that he should *begin* to deliver Israel,” which, of course, was not completed at his death. Bedford has remarked some singular conformities in the history of Sampson, which, however fanciful, perhaps deserve to be transcribed. “Idolatry first commenced
in

thenticity of the text, and the system by which we have attempted to reconcile and explain it, seem to be established as the conclusion of a great and extensive chain of reasoning and induction; as the natural result which all the preceding arguments and inferences finally indicated; as the point to which all the collateral series of proofs and premises, ultimately converged; as the term and object of the several principles which have guided and directed us; the last link in the concatenation of the several distinct, and independent chains of evidence we have collected, and the final resting place at which all the paths conducting to the temple of truth, meet together.

And, surely, when I have submitted a mode of following the sacred historian, exempt from the errors and mistakes which are usually ascribed to the other supporters of the Hebrew reading, no Christian chronologist will have any hesitation, from

in the tribe of Dan, and that tribe afforded the last of the (lay) Judges to Israel, and it was not permitted to him to redeem his country. The first Idol was made of 1100 pieces of Silver; Sampson was betrayed for the same sum; by treachery the tribe of Dan gained their inheritance; by treachery their judge was surprised. Dan is omitted among the sealed tribes, (Revel.) for their idolatry;" to which he might have added, that Sampson's jurisdiction is, in part, confounded with that of Eli, and was not acknowledged by some of the tribes, probably from the same cause; "Micah of Ephraim, was the first idolator, Samuel of Ephraim, the first reformer;" and as the settlement of the Danites was contemporary with the first act of Idolatry; so as we have seen, the first reformer was contemporary with the Danite judge: these observations are further evidence against the theory of Vignoles, (on the jurisdiction of Sampson) which we have examined so much at length above.

Bedford Scrip. Chron. London, 1723.

from vanity, love of paradox, or adherence to system, to follow and adopt it. For when we can avoid it, Si ad Scripturas sacras admissa fuerint vel *officiosa mendacia* quid in eis remanebit auctoritatis? Tostatus apud Vossium.